THE LABOUR MONTHLY

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

Editor: R. PALME DUTT

Volume 9 May, 1927 Number 5

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS

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The Government Trade Union Bill
R. COPPOCK

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W. J. BROWN

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The World of Labour

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NOTES of the MONTH

After Twelve Months—Trade Union Bill and Dictatorship—1867-1927—A New Era—From Taff Vale to Baldwin—End of Liberal Capitalism—Legal Organisation of Wage-Slavery—No Distinction Economic and Political—Wage Issues Revolutionary—Trade Unions to Revolution—Minority Movement—Suppression the Reply—Against Revolutionary Trade Unionism — Sectional Unions Permitted—Liberal Protests Valueless—Either Capitalist or Proletarian Dictatorship—Fascism, Webbism and Paul-Boncour—Trade Union Bill as Reformist Policy—Police-Reformist Alliance—Where do the Reformist Leaders Stand?—Preparing to Bargain—The Real Fight

THE Government's Trade Union Bill, coming as the inevitable sequel of the defeat of the miners and the smashing of the General Strike, is the sharpest declaration yet of the real policy of British Capitalism to-day. For twelve months the dominant Labour Party and trade union leaders have been steadily on the retreat ever since the declaration of the General Strike, apologising for the General Strike, condemning the General Strike and all strike policies, condemning the miners for their resistance, stabbing them in the back, vowing "Never again," preaching industrial peace, joining up openly with the employers, denouncing and expelling the revolutionaries and honest working-class fighters, and disrupting the Labour Party and trade unions. What is the outcome? Is the attack in any way diminished, are the workers one whit protected by this "safe," "sane," "cautious," "moderate," "constitutional" policy? On the contrary. *The attack is intensified.* As the revolutionaries predicted, the abandonment of the miners has at once led to the extension of the attack to the whole working class. It is no longer a question simply of the General Strike; it is no longer a question of the imprisonment of a dozen Communists; it is no longer

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even a question of the wages and standards of a principal section of the working class. It is the elementary trade union and political rights of the workers that are now the subject of attack. From this can be learnt the lesson that there is no half-way house, no safe, moderate, constitutional resting-place in the class struggle. Whoever is not prepared to fight must retreat, and must go on retreating until a stand is made. The Trade Union Bill is the blow of reality, after the poison-gas of industrial peace propaganda, censures of the miners, and renunciation of the struggle. Let the lesson be learned. The whole working class is awakening to the fight; but the voice of compromise and bargaining on top is already heard. On the fighting strength of the workers to resist, and on nothing else, will depend the outcome of the new attack.

BY this new Bill the break between modern bourgeois policy and the old forms of democracy receives its clearest expression. Here the sequel of the General Strike, of the war-confrontation of the capitalist state machine and of the organised workers, is given legal form. It is no longer possible to trust to the old liberal safeguards to hold in the workers; the intensity of the class struggle in the period of capitalist decline has grown too great; the new revolutionary forces are becoming too strong; the humbug of the old Liberal leaders is wearing thin. The General Strike demonstrated that the workers had grown beyond the old bounds; it was not the actual danger that most alarmed the bourgeoisie—they had too many odds on their side for that, too much grounds for confidence still in the weaknesses, illusions, as well as the operations of their own agents in the workers' ranks—but rather the revelation of what the future holds in store. Therefore they find it necessary on the heels of victory to reinforce their position in time, to hold in the workers henceforth with open chains of law. The two camps are now plainly recognised. The workers are directly subjected to a special régime, with special penalties. For the first time in law a "strike" is proclaimed a legal crime. Millions of workers are threatened with imprisonment for the crime of withholding their labour. In this way the régime of capitalist democracy approaches its legal end. The fiction of the freedom of the labour contract is now denied in

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legal form as well as in fact. The General Strike and the Trade Union Bill are the two decisive signposts of the new era. With the advance of the class struggle the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie comes increasingly into the open.

SIXTY years ago Conservatism passed the principal legislation establishing the modern basis of the trade unions. To-day Conservatism is engaged in destroying that basis. This change marks an era. The meaning of this change is well worth the study of the Fabian Liberal-Labour pedlars in illusions of gradual "progress" within capitalism who still dominate the traditional school of the existing Labour Movement and who are wholly out of touch with the realities of the modern period. They can only meet the new developments with "horror" and "amazement" at such "fantastic" proposals. "The whole thing is entirely out of touch with twentieth-century ideas and conditions," is the verdict of Pugh, the chairman of the General Council at the time of the General Strike. On the contrary. It is extremely in keeping with the century of the imperialist world war, of the beginning of the world revolution, of civil war, of dictatorship and extraordinary legislation, of Fascism, of chemical warfare, of colonial oppression and air-bombing, of the capitalist offensive—and of the General Strike. It is extremely in keeping with the century which began appropriately with the Boxer international massacre by the "civilised" Powers, with the South African robber-war, with the Hague Hypocrites' Conference—and with the foundation of the Labour Party. In other words it is extremely in keeping with the period of imperialism, that is, with the period of capitalist decline. Whoever does not see this, but sees the new Bill only as a monstrous apparition, a bolt from the blue, an erratic flare-up of obsolete reaction, an inexplicable, unforeseen accident and throwback—like the war, the fall in wages, or the growth of Communism, as they appear to the Fabian Liberal-Socialist mind—is not at the beginning of understanding the problems of the working class in the present period; is still digging at the dead Liberal roots of servitude to Capital (Fabianism), when the advance of the class struggle will no longer allow the yield of any fruits for such pains, instead of advancing

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to the clear understanding of the real working-class struggle in the present imperialist era and the consequent action upon such understanding (Leninism).

IT is sometimes attempted to compare the present attack to that of the Taff Vale Judgment and the Osborne Judgment. But the conditions, as well as the scope, of the present attack represent such a volume of difference as to make no true comparison possible. Then the attack was still an outpost affair through the reactionary law courts, endeavouring by indirect means, by the trickery of economic liabilities and financial restrictions, to prevent the functioning of the unions. To-day the attack is directly led by the Government of the day as its major political issue; the Government and the political party organising the attack represent the overwhelming majority of the bourgeoisie; the attack is openly turned on to the whole operation and organisation of trade unionism, seeking to make strikes "illegal" under virtually any conditions that the Government of the day and judiciary may choose to determine, to make strikers personally responsible, to make advocacy of major strikes a crime, to make the funds of the unions seizable, to make the discipline of the unions inoperative, to make not only picketing, but the most passive demonstration of working-class feeling a crime, to make combined action impossible, to make strikes for any higher object than wages, hours or conditions of employment impossible, to cut off the unions as collective bodies from politics, and to cut off the State machine and all services connected with it from the Labour Movement. The character of this attack (even after making full allowance for the proportion of sweeping clauses only inserted in the first draft to be possibly removed or toned down subsequently as "concessions") is of such a magnitude as to raise completely new questions and mark a new era in the relationship of the working-class movement and the State.

NEVERTHELESS it may be noted incidentally that the Taff Vale Judgment and Osborne Judgment are forerunners of the present attack. Although no more than preliminary guerrilla warfare, they represent as it were storm-signals of the new period. The Taff Vale Judgment twenty-

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six years ago was the first sign of change, the first attempt to reverse the "ordered progress" of the nineteenth century, and withdraw the privileges previously accorded by the consent of both political parties. It was the first sign *backwards*. Thus the twentieth century opened at its outset with a signal of the new period. It is true that the Trades Disputes Act of 1906 nominally restored the old position, and even strengthened it by extended and clearer interpretation. But it could not and did not restore the relative stability of the old position. For the Trades Dispute Act was already in the sphere of "partisan" legislation, carried as a sequel of violent mass-agitation, and in the face of violent opposition, with the trade unions drawn by that agitation into the full stream of politics, and with a powerful section of the bourgeoisie vowing opposition and reversal. The renewed attack of the Osborne Judgment in 1908, and the very inadequate and unsatisfactory defending Act of 1913, were only a continuation of the fight. Trade union rights were already in the full zig-zag of daily political struggle. The war, while in reality it forced forward to the extreme point, as with every other immanent tendency of Capitalism, the State control and regimentation of the trade unions, obscured for the moment from view the permanent character of the issues raised (the full significance of this most shameful section in the history of the trade union bureaucracy, embodied in the Munitions Act, has never yet been adequately treated). The large-scale struggles since the war, culminating in the General Strike, made increasingly clear the new issues. Thus the Trade Union Bill is the outcome of a whole process of development, in which the trade unions have moved increasingly to larger and political issues, while the bourgeoisie has increasingly attempted to push back, confine and control the operations of the unions, and even withdraw the rights already accorded.

WHAT is the meaning of this change? Put shortly, it may be said that the advance of capitalism and of the class struggle has made impossible the continuance of the old Liberal methods. So long as capitalism was broken up into comparatively small-scale enterprises of a number of employers the fiction of freedom could be maintained. The worker could be

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supposed "free" to "choose" between one employer and another, and even permitted to organise in collective groups to bargain better (provided always he organised in still more divided sectional groups without real unity); the only unspoken condition was that he must choose some employer; he was not free to escape from the employing class. As Marx declared: "The worker leaves the capitalist to whom he has hired himself as often as he likes, and the capitalist dismisses him as often as he thinks fit. But the worker, whose only source of income is the sale of his labour-power, cannot leave the whole class of purchasers, that is, the capitalist class, without giving up his existence. *He belongs not to this or that capitalist, but to the capitalist class.*" This is the description of the Liberal period (written in 1849), of Liberal wage-slavery.

BUT when capitalism develops to the large-scale monopolist stage, under the increasingly close direction and control of the State, this position is no longer possible. There is now in effect only one trust to employ the workers. In consequence the old nominal freedom automatically disappears in practice; and it becomes only a question of time, if capitalism succeeds in maintaining its hold, before the political and legal forms change correspondingly. The workers can no longer be allowed even the old nominal freedom of movement within their slavery. Since there is only one trust to employ, the pretence of freedom of choice cannot be maintained: the workers must either obey or be disciplined. So the whole movement of modern trustified capitalism is in the direction of increasingly open dictatorship, suppression, extraordinary laws, emergency powers or Fascism. Just as Liberalism gives place to imperialism in the foreign field, so it gives place to concentration of power of the Executive and of the bureaucracy at home, to the suppression even of Parliament, and the attempted absorption or repression of all independent forms of organisation of the workers. It becomes a question of the "public interest" that the "essential services" must be maintained; and since the "essential services" happen to be the trusts, it becomes a question of "public interest" that the trusts must be protected, and that the workers must be compelled to

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obey them and work for their profit (supply the "essential services") uninterruptedly, since the alternative is economic and political breakdown. The old unorganised situation cannot be left. *Large-scale capitalism inevitably moves to the legal organisation of wage-slavery.*

IN the era of trustified capitalism, in consequence, the distinction between economic and political issues breaks down. All issues, however small, affect the whole system, and are therefore in the last resort political. It is inevitable that if a whole industry has become a single unit any issue, whatever its character, affects the entire industry. If that industry is an essential part of the whole organisation of production, then that same issue, whatever its original character, affects the whole organisation of production and therefore the whole social organisation, and raises much larger issues. Previously the play of economic issues within an industry, of wage-bargaining and strikes, represented only in a sharper form the haggling of the market, the competition between the resources of a section of capitalists and the holding-out powers of a section of workers. But now there is no longer the old market. Competition is killed by monopoly. In place of the automatic regulative mechanism of the market, organised capital is confronted with the organised working class. The class character of the issue, even of the smallest wage bargain, is laid bare without concealment. The outcome depends on consolidated class strength, on class power. Thus every issue, however limited to begin with, however "purely economic" or "purely industrial," as the General Council with its head in the sand would like to persuade itself, raises inevitably, if it is pressed forward with determination, the whole issue of class power, of capitalist class domination. The trade unions can only advance to the new political issue of united class struggle against organised capitalism and the State, of revolutionary class struggle, or surrender all along the line. On this the capitalists are very clear, as they showed last May. And therefore they are determined at all costs to prevent the unity of the trade unions, to cut their claws and prevent their action, even on the old economic issues, save within the most limited, sectional lines.

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MORE than this. The period of trustified capitalism is the period of capitalist decline. The increased productive power, the large-scale organisation of production, reaches its highest point, but for this very reason becomes incompatible with the obsolete basis of private individual property ownership and narrow national States. The huge productive forces and drive to expansion beat against these bonds, and find no adequate outlet within the limits of private ownership and production for exchange. The intensified competition resulting leads to imperialist antagonism, war, restriction of production, unemployment and wage-cutting. The conditions of the workers go downwards ; the class struggle is intensified ; the ratio of production to productive power, and even the absolute level of production, goes downwards. This process reveals itself in all the older capitalist countries, but most of all in the oldest, Britain, where the admittedly necessary process of reconstruction and adaptation is checked at every turn by the existing framework of obsolete property rights. Thus every economic issue becomes in this period a revolutionary and political issue in a far more basic sense than that of simply involving the intervention of the State. The simplest economic issue raises the whole organisation of industry and society. The basic industries are declared "economically incapable" (*i.e.*, incapable within the existing system of property rights) of paying a subsistence wage : the money is "not in the industry," although the wealth of the capitalist class is obvious, and the power of production is greater than ever. In this way the most elementary wage demands, and even resistance to wage-cuts, come to raise revolutionary issues. The capitalist class is driven to the position of a purely reactionary force, resisting every advance, and closing its ranks with all the reactionary elements in the social order, while effective leadership passes increasingly to the Right. Thus policy to the trade unions passes from liberal tolerance and skilful negotiation to direct force, repression and control. There is no longer scope for bargaining, a harmless, neutral sphere in which the trade unions may be allowed to operate freely without danger of raising major issues. The most innocent economic issues now become "subversive." In this way the Trade Union Bill is the expression of the policy of Capitalism in decline.

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BUT the same process that forces Capitalism to endeavour to repress and confine the action of the trade unions, forces the trade unions to endeavour to enlarge and extend the scope of their action. It becomes clear to every thinking trade unionist that the unions can no longer continue under modern conditions with any hope of success on the old sectional lines, and that not only amalgamation on industrial lines is necessary, but unification of the entire organised workers' forces. It is obvious that the whole drive of modern trade unionism, despite the doubts, delays, retreats and actual sabotage of the leading machine, which fears the consequent unmasking of class issues, moves in this direction ; and that the General Strike was only a first, and not a last, step of a new process, already prepared for and foreshadowed by the foundation of the General Council. But the enlargement of the character of the fight, as well as the failure of the old wage-bargaining, carries with it an enlargement of the issues : Trade unionism is brought into direct conflict with the State (seven times on a large scale in the past sixteen years), is compelled to take up questions of the organisation of industry, of war and peace, &c. In the period of capitalist decline, trade unionism, if it is to continue as a fighting organisation of the workers, is driven more and more to take up political issues. But this process is in itself revolutionary, however much it may at first be concealed in form (formation of the Labour Party as an indirect vehicle of trade union politics, only later to be superseded in all big issues by the direct confrontation of the trade union executives and the State ; entry into conflict with the State, while vowing loyalty to the Constitution, &c.). So British trade unionism, despite all its famous conservatism, traditionalism, constitutionalism and the rest of it, with the crust of reaction and reactionary leadership still unbroken upon its surface, nevertheless passes inevitably by the process of events, because there is no alternative, into the path of the General Strike, that is, of concealed civil war.

THUS while Capitalism moves increasingly to reaction, the trade unions move to revolutionisation. The growth of the revolutionary forces in the Labour Move-

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ment is not, as the Tories and MacDonalds and other Bolshevik-hunters imagine, the result of revolutionary "plots" and "nuclei," but of the process of events in relation to the common sense of a growing number of organised workers. The organised and conscious revolutionary workers, who assist, in the face of every obstacle and intimidation, in clarifying and organising this growing consciousness, are simply doing their working-class duty, as every honest person in the Labour Movement, whatever his views, knows. But it is just this growth of the revolutionary forces that gives the sharpness and urgency to the new problem from the point of view of Capitalism, making necessary open, coercive measures in place of the old tactical ingenuity and conciliation. If the Labour Movement had remained securely in the hands of the MacDonalds, Hendersons and Thomases, without danger of deflection from other forces, the capitalists would be at peace; the workers could be fleeced without difficulty, and every wage-cut and capitalist move would be accepted "in the public interest." Against such lap-dogs the whips of the Trade Union Bill would never have been invoked, as the capitalists themselves clearly declare; a piece of sugar would be sufficient. Even the presence of the small revolutionary minority which has always existed in the trade unions would not have made and did not make, so long as the situation was not ripe to give scope to their influence, any crisis as to-day. It is the visible possibility of a revolutionary mass movement, of the revolutionary conquest of the trade unions, as evidenced in the General Strike, the miners' struggle and the growth of the Minority Movement, that gives rise to the present crisis.

WHAT is the response to this process of revolutionisation from the previously unchallenged apparatus of Capitalist Government and Liberal trade unionism? The response is identical in both cases. It is a response of *coercive repression*. The reformist bureaucrats do not attempt to argue with the Communists or with the Minority Movement, whose aims and policy they consciously distort on lines set them by the sensationalist millionaire Press ("slaves of Moscow," "destroyers," "disruptionists," "poison," &c.); they do not even trust to

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the processes of democracy in which they profess to believe, once it becomes clear to them that those processes can begin to yield results very disturbing to themselves (election of Cook, Scarborough decisions of the Trades Union Congress, all holding out possibilities of very rapid developments in view of the speedy growth of the Minority Movement to over a million members, and similar signs). They endeavour speedily to stamp out the new force by disciplinary measures, by expulsions, suspensions, disfranchisements, refusal of representation, &c. In exactly the same way the Government throws aside the pretence of liberal methods, of negotiation and conciliation. They turn at once to the legal coercive machine to stamp out the new forces, to make illegal the new methods and policies of trade unionism. *The Government is determined not to allow Left-Wing control of the trade unions. If it should come, the trade unions are to be made illegal, and only Right-Wing unions allowed. This is the real meaning of the Trade Union Bill.*

THE Government's Trade Union Bill is thus essentially a Bill to safeguard the trade unions against the revolution. It is in this respect exactly the same as the campaign that the reformist leaders have themselves been waging ; and this is the real danger of the situation. For the protests of the reformist leaders are all protests in the name of the old liberal economic rights of the trade unions, the right, in the words of the National Joint Council resolution, to defend " standards of life and conditions of employment " when these are " assailed by organised employers." But the Government will readily reply to this that there is no intention of attacking these " legitimate " rights, so far as possible, and that amendments will be gladly considered to secure this. The attack is nominally not against trade unionism as such, but against revolutionary trade unionism—against united trade unionism, combined action, sympathetic strikes, general strikes, mass picketing and the rest. But this is precisely what the reformist leaders have themselves been attacking. How then can they put up a defence against the Government's attack? This is the crux of the situation. It is noticeable that in all the statements issued after the publication of the Government's Bill,

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not a single reformist leader defends the General Strike. And yet, on a real understanding of the situation, this is the central issue.

THE distinction which the Government attempts to make between "legitimate" trade unionism and revolutionary trade unionism is in fact a distinction without a difference. For trade unionism to-day, if it is to fight at all, must inevitably be revolutionary, *i.e.*, united, political, centrally led, fighting the State strike-breaking machine, &c. If this is not allowed, trade unionism is weaponless in the modern era. If united action is not allowed, if the sympathetic strike is not allowed, if the General Strike is not allowed, if conflicts involving the State are not allowed, if conflicts involving the "community" or "a substantial portion of the community" are not allowed, then trade unionism may as well give up the fight under modern conditions. The shell of the old, formal, limited rights may remain; but there is no longer any reality behind them. The permission to fight is kindly granted only under such conditions as will guarantee the capitalists complete success. The sectional trade unionism which is allowed to remain is utterly useless, helpless and ineffective to assist the workers; it ceases to be an organ of the workers' class struggle and becomes only an instrument of capitalist administration. All this was pointed out when the reformist leaders began their campaign of "Never Again" after the General Strike. But the reformist leaders simply played into the hands of the Government attack, and made them a present of the distinction which it is now their pleasure to use.

THE Liberal protests, in the name of the old limited economic rights, as expressed by some of the Liberal spokesmen and by the reformist leaders, are valueless, and bear no relation to present issues. They assume that the attack is simply a throwback resurrectionist attack by an eccentric group of Die-hards temporarily in a position of power upon the rights of the trade unions as settled fifty years ago, and they bring up all the old arguments of the expediency of Liberal methods to avoid class struggle. The National Joint Council regrets that the measure will "intensify class strife and embitter industrial

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relations." The *Manchester Guardian* finds it "a political disaster"; "no sensible man of any party doubts that reforms are needed in the trade union world. The best way to prevent reform is to throw down a challenge to the trade unions." Lord Grey finds it "a huge mistake" to have laid down a direct line of conflict with the whole Labour Movement: "the community has no desire to revoke the charter of the trade unions," so long as "constitutional methods" are maintained. Clynes regrets that "it brings down with a crash all the recent efforts to produce feelings of goodwill in industry." Henderson finds the measure "a direct attack upon the vital principle of working-class combination and common action in defence of the general standards of life and employment which the unions exist to maintain." (It will be observed that the unions "exist to maintain," in Henderson's view, certain "standards of employment"; there is no question of the political general strike, as, for example, for resistance to war, to which the Movement is officially committed: the issue is simply shirked.)

ALL these Liberal arguments and pleadings evade the real issue of the conflict between organised Capitalism, centralised in the modern State, and the organised working class. This issue, once it is reached with the bareness revealed in the General Strike, can no longer be got over and concealed with smug phrases of class-conciliation and diplomacy after the old Liberal model. It can only end either in open Capitalist dictatorship or in revolution. The policy of the Baldwin Government is not an erratic "sport" of an irresponsible Die-hard minority, lacking the wisdom and experience of the Liberal reformers. On the contrary it represents the real trend of policy of modern Capitalism, as a survey of the international situation will show. What Fascism has attempted to do with the trade unions in Italy, that British Conservatism is beginning to tackle in its own fashion here. The modern large-scale centralised social organisation the old unorganised "Liberal" position cannot remain. *The trade unions cannot remain neutral economic bodies.* In fact they must become part of the apparatus either of Capitalist dictatorship or of Proletarian dictatorship. If the trade unions fail in the fight

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with Capitalism, then Capitalism will attempt to absorb them and turn them into governmental institutions. The only alternative for the trade unions in the last stage of Capitalism is to take up openly the fight against the Capitalist State, that is, to enter with full consciousness on the revolutionary path. Only revolutionary trade unionism can fight and defeat the attack represented by the Government Trade Union Bill.

AND in fact the State capitalist regimentation of the trade unions is the inevitable outcome of reformist policy. This is the final realisation of all the preachings of " Never Again " and Industrial Peace. Once again a survey of the international situation will show this clearly. The shameful signed agreement of D'Aragona and the Italian reformist leaders with Fascism, at the same time as revolutionary trade unionists all over the world, in Italy, in Lithuania, in the Balkans, in China, are dying for their principles—that is the true expression and outcome of reformism. The trade unions are handed over bound to the mercies of Mussolini—because Fascism, they discover and announce to the world, has after all much in common with Social Democracy. In France the Paul-Boncour Militarisation Bill, prepared by the Socialist Party and the General Staff in unison, and voted by the entire Chamber with the exception of the Communists, hands over to the Capitalist State in emergency dictatorial powers over all individuals and associations, including the trade unions, which are thus militarily subjected to the Capitalist State. Here is the policy of " Socialism " of the Second International. And indeed the whole movement of Fabianism in England goes in the same direction ; as an examination of the Webbs' *Trade Unionism*, and in particular of the concluding chapter in the revised post-war edition, would show, where the whole progress of trade unionism becomes an advance, not in class-consciousness and strength and power as organs of class-struggle, but an advance from the old unrespectable semi-outlaw public-house position to that of respected pillars of the State, represented in all organs of capitalist administration, and co-operating with the Government in all measures. Reformism,

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while still using the language of Liberalism, becomes in fact simply the servant and social organiser of Imperialism.

FOR this reason, in this attack, as in every capitalist attack in the present period, the greatest danger lies, not in the attack itself (a solid front of the workers can completely repulse it and make it, even if carried into legislation, practically invalid), but in the reformist leaders, who from the workers' side are in practice co-operating with the capitalists in the attack. *The Government Trade Union Bill represents, as to 75 per cent., the policy preached by the reformist leaders.* It is the reformist leaders who have preached against any trade union alliance as an attack on "the community"; it is the reformist leaders who have denounced the General Strike; it is the reformist leaders who have proclaimed the superior interests of "the Nation" and "the State" and "the Constitution." The Government has simply translated into law the arguments supplied them. And in practice, at the same time as the whole need is for a common defensive front ("I now appeal to all trade unionists to rally together," in MacDonald's own statement), the reformist leaders are busy breaking up that front and expelling and disfranchising good trade unionists and trade union organisations, on the basis of disloyalty to those same "community" "Constitution" doctrines.

ON the same day that the text of the Trade Union Bill was issued, Frank Hodges (who, as the joint-employee of Baldwin and Amsterdam, embodies, as it were, professionally the policy of class-conciliation, showing how easily reconcilable are the salaries of capital and labour in one person), lunching with the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce and speaking on "Industrial Relations; Can They be Improved?" said:—

> Employers, on the one hand, who do not understand the legitimate principle of trade unionism, and the followers of the Bolshevist philosophy on the other, can destroy such measure of prosperity as exists, unless there is strong rigorous action on our joint part to destroy them. (*The Times*, April 5, 1926.)

Where Hodges speaks, there speak MacDonald, Thomas and the rest. This is their outlook at the moment of the launching of

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the Trade Union Bill. The "legitimate principle of trade unionism"—how reminiscent of the very language of his master, Baldwin—so well understood and approved by the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, is sharply contrasted with revolutionary trade unionism. Against the latter there must be "strong rigorous action on our joint part" to destroy it. On whose joint part? On the joint part of business men and Labour leaders, of Hodges and the Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, of MacDonald and Baldwin, of Churchill and Thomas, of the reformist leaders and their capitalist masters. This is the policy of Hodges, Thomas, MacDonald and the rest. And this is the policy which is realised—"strong rigorous action on our joint part"—in the expulsions and disfranchisements on the one side, and the Trade Union Bill on the other.

AT the present moment the whole Labour leadership is speaking in opposition to the Trade Union Bill. The unanimity and resentment of the whole working-class movement allows no other utterance. But, with the example of the General Strike fresh in mind, the workers will do well to look sharply, and to demand, what lies behind those words. Twelve months ago there was an even greater unanimity of utterance of the whole leadership, under the pressure of the working class, to resist to the last with the whole power of the movement any Government attack on the miners' standards. The outcome is known; and it is only after the event that the reformist leaders have explained to us that they did not mean their words and their pledges, but in view of the volume of working-class feeling did not consider it expedient at the time to say so. Into what is this opposition in words to be translated? This is the decisive question. Is the Special Conference of Executives to meet only to "hear," according to the announcement, the plan of a propaganda campaign, or to prepare united action? Is the Bill to be allowed to become law? If the Bill becomes law, will the reformist leaders proceed to turn the other cheek and announce that in future no proposals for united action must be considered, since these are now "illegal," and so make use of the timely assistance of the abused law to overcome their Left-Wing critics? Will the Labour Parliamentary

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spokesmen oppose every section of the Bill without reserve, or will they seek to bargain and negotiate for amendments and "improvements"? Will the next Labour Government be pledged to repeal the Bill as a whole, or will they utilise, and perhaps even seek to preserve, some of the provisions themselves against a strike movement, as they have already utilised the Emergency Powers Act? On all these questions the workers will do well to demand plain answers, and to enforce genuine opposition.

ALREADY there are plenty of signs of danger, even in the statements made immediately following the publication of the Bill. In all these statements only certain issues are touched (the political levy, economic rights of the unions, Civil Servants and the Labour Party, &c.); others are left completely untouched (united action, the general strike, the political general strike). The *Daily Herald* even issues an editorial to prove that the question of the General Strike is of no importance in relation to the Trade Union Bill. And in the statements of the Parliamentary leaders, such as MacDonald and Snowden, the offer of bargaining is plainly suggested. It was MacDonald who proposed, while the Bill was in preparation, a Government inquiry to consider the amendment of Trade Union law. And after the Bill is published, we find him declaring :—

> The Bill is a handicap to Labour in so far as it treats of admitted difficulties which might be the subject of an exchange of views. (*Daily Herald*, April 6, 1927.)

Here the offer is plain and open. United action of the unions, centralised control, sympathetic strikes, general strikes, mass-picketing, all these, against which MacDonald has often enough proclaimed his opposition in language barely distinguishable from that of Baldwin, and indeed often quoted by Baldwin with pleasure, are "admitted difficulties." But the Conservative Government has been tactless. These questions "might be the subject of an exchange of views." The united front of Baldwin and MacDonald already shows through.

AGAINST the menace of the Government's Trade Union Bill the strongest opposition needs to be organised by the working-class movement, and the pressure will need

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to come from below. In a characteristic servile editorial, the *Daily Herald* advises the workers to defeat the Trade Union Bill by—"loyalty and discipline" to their leaders.

> The Movement is fighting against the worst piece of class legislation this Government has yet produced, and in that fight there is need of two things—Loyalty and Discipline.
>
> The General Council, the Labour Party, and the Parliamentary Labour Party should have no doubt that in whatever action they take they will have with them the rank and file of the trade unions, the voters for the Labour Party, and all who still have any regard for fairness and justice.

If this advice is taken, the Trade Union Bill will certainly not be defeated. In exactly the same way, twelve months ago, the *Daily Herald* on the eve of the General Strike came out with the advice to "Trust Your Leaders," with the result that is known. The strength of the fight against the Trade Union Bill depends entirely on the strength of working-class pressure, and not at all on the General Council, &c., who, if left to themselves, will do nothing at all beyond a little formal opposition. Loyalty and discipline to the working-class movement require that the greatest possible vigilance and the greatest possible pressure shall be exerted towards the reformist leaders, through whom the movement still has to carry out its action, and who are for the most part known and notorious traitors, collaborators with the Baldwin Government, and secret or open opponents of the united trade union action that is the principal subject of attack. The General Council, Labour Party, and Parliamentary Labour Party should not at all be in the position of having "no doubt" that they "will have with them the rank and file" "*in whatever action they take.*" On the contrary. They should have no doubt, and be made to have no doubt, that they will "have with them the rank and file" *only if they put up a genuine fight with the whole force of the working-class movement, without reserve or compromise, against the Government's Trade Union Bill.* This fight can only be carried out and enforced by the action and agitation of Left-Wing revolutionary trade unionism, which is the true protagonist in the present fight with the Baldwin Government, and which must with its campaign awaken the whole working class.

R.P.D.

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THE GOVERNMENT TRADE UNION BILL

By R. COPPOCK

THE activities of the great British Trade Union Movement have been wonderfully stimulated by the introduction of the Government's Trades Disputes Bill, and many and various are the criticisms of this piece of Conservative legislation which have been put forth.

On the one hand the opponents of the Bill have shown how it attacks the liberty of the subject, and how it is, in fact, a piece of State interference in the administration of our well-established Trade Union Movement. These have issued a call to arms and have advised the workers to use all their power to prevent it from becoming an Act of Parliament or in other words the law of the land.

On the other hand the supporters of the Bill state that what is being done is in the great interests of the nation, as they hold that for the trade unions to have the power which was manifest in May of 1926, is a serious menace to the nation and that disciplinary action must be taken.

We, therefore, see lined up on either hand two parties composed of strong and determined people, the one with political power, no morals and the big stick, and the other with a growing control of industrial organisational power whose efforts throughout its century of existence have been the only bright light that has guided the millions of toilers and moilers of this island of ours.

In the debates which will take place upon this measure in its passage through the House nothing new will be said, and the speeches which will be delivered by the supporters of the Bill can be read now if one takes the trouble to read the records of the House of Commons a century ago, for indeed there is no new point to develop other than the trade unions' association with the Labour Party which is only about twenty-five years old. The opposition will indeed use the same arguments as did the staunch few who fought for trade union rights years ago, perhaps with

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a greater clarity and with more skill, but still their story will be the same.

The big difference will be that the workers in the Trade Union Movement are more in numbers and more responsive and expressive.

The most important point in the whole question is that millions of men and women are preparing for this great political battle, and that this repressive legislation cannot do other than reshape the political outlook of many members of the working classes who in the past have been swayed by political slogan-coiners. Repressive legislation has always affected great masses of people and brought them up against the realities of their times.

We have a simple demonstration of the above in Ireland, whose great national spirit was subordinated to the political power of the British Parliament. We saw the revolt that arose from that political repression. There is also Russia, where the same story is told, only more vividly, because the present Government of that nation is the greatest challenge the *status quo* has ever received in history. Other great historical examples could be cited if there were space and time at our disposal in which to do so.

Why, therefore, do we find ourselves in this position? The answer should be simple, as is indeed the answer to all the great working-class questions of the world; it is that the workers of this country are realising that, having trusted the landlord class and the industrial magnates with political and industrial power for generations, they have only been able to loosen the chains very slightly on occasions, whilst the industrial conditions have remained as before. There have been manifestations of a growing desire for a complete change in our industrial relationship in society, some of which may even appear to have been misdirected, but that is a matter of opinion. They have been sufficient, however, to show the great desire of the worker for a change, whilst the direction was indicated by the many and varied roads we have travelled. What really set the clock of working-class opinion and demonstrated only too clearly the apparent separation of the classes in society was the events of 1925 and 1926.

The industrialists in their endeavour to entrench themselves further in Capitalist Society used their new economic power (won

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by the great plundering of the national coffers during the war) and the great army of unemployed, which has risen to enormous dimensions owing to the reduced purchasing power of the world (also resultant from the world war), to reduce the comparatively decent standard of life to which the workers had attained in 1919 to the 1914 basis (all this was again done in the interests of the nation). Defeat after defeat has been the record of the workers' organisations since the declaration of peace. Then followed the desire of the workers for a great effort to help those of their comrades who were being crushed even further than human endurance would allow. The Government collapsed under the pressure of 1925, but not so in 1926. The inevitable happened, and we saw the greatest demonstration of solidarity this nation has ever seen ; the action was an heroic one and ranked with the greatest of working-class demonstrations and action the world over. To the governing class, however, it was unpardonable, and the politicians used every effort to crush it : Navy, Army, Police, Specials, and wireless lies. The crisis passed, and it was the Government's business to see that their friends must never again be upset by such a demonstration.

So we are faced with this repressive Bill. I do not intend to go into the pros and cons of it: so many people have done so already. All I desire to say to the Government of the day is that they are too late; they may proceed with their Bill; it may become law. We for our part must remember that we as workers must organise in ever greater numbers; that concentration and co-operation must be our work, and that we must build up our movement industrially and politically. The power is ours when we have the courage to take it; and when we have political control the game of playing the statesman must cease, and our efforts should be devoted to correcting first the repressiveness of reactionary laws, and then onward to bring the complete revolution of society as we know it to-day, and lay the permanent foundation on which we shall build up the great Co-operative Commonwealth and complete the emancipation of the workers both by hand and brain. We must not lament over our lot; we must expect these attacks. Let us repel them by action, which is the only method that will get us there.

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CIVIL SERVANTS AND THE T.U. BILL

By W. J. BROWN
(*General Secretary, Civil Service Clerical Association*)

ANY commentator on the terms of the Bill as it affects Civil Servants and Civil Service Organisations must bear in mind the special position which they already occupy. Civil Service Associations differ from ordinary Trade Unions in two important respects. First, they have no such powers of imposing discipline on their members as the ordinary Trade Union possesses (as, for example, by withdrawing a member's card and thereby affecting his ability to secure employment). Secondly, Civil Servants are already deprived of the right to strike. And thirdly, Civil Servants, since they are the employees of the House of Commons, are even more directly affected by political events than the outside worker. Regarded in the light of these three factors, the provisions of the Bill, vile as they are in regard to the Trade Union Movement generally, become vicious in the extreme so far as Civil Servants are concerned.

Because of the absence of the strike weapon Civil Servants can less afford to stand alone than anyone. Thus the importance of affiliations to the Trades Union Congress. Because of the immediate reaction on the Service of political events Civil Servants cannot afford to be politically impotent. Thus the affiliation to the Labour Party, the promotion of Service Parliamentary Candidatures, and the creation of constituency machinery for bringing pressure to bear on candidates at election times.

And it is precisely these things that Clause 5 of the Bill hits most directly and most hardly. It provides that it shall be an offence punishable by dismissal for a Civil Servant to be a member of any Association which :—

(1) Has members outside the Service ;
(2) Is affiliated to any other body which has members outside the Service ;
(3) Has " political objects," or
(4) Is associated " directly or indirectly " with any Political Party.

If the Bill goes through, Service Associations will either have to become outlaw organisations or alter their constitutions to conform

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to the Bill. If they choose the latter course (as the only alternative to sheer impotence), the results would be :—

(1) To destroy the Postal and Civil Service Internationals.
(2) To destroy the affiliation between Civil Service Organisations and the Federation of Professional Workers.
(3) To destroy the affiliation of 30,000 Civil Servants with the Labour Party and the Trades Union Congress.
(4) To destroy the political funds of the Association.
(5) To make it impossible for Civil Service Associations to promote their own Parliamentary Candidates—(this is a "political object").
(6) To make it impossible for Civil Service Associations to support or oppose the candidatures of other people—friendly or hostile to the Service.
(7) To put every Civil Servant and Civil Service Association at the mercy of the "regulations" to be issued by the Treasury (and not to be submitted to the House of Commons).

The sole remedies for any grievance left available when the Bill becomes law will be (*a*) the Whitley system, and (*b*) the Civil Service Industrial Court. The two can be disposed of in as many sentences. Whitleyism is a costly and elaborate farce—no decision on anything being possible except by the consent of the Official Side. The Board of Arbitration can deal only with certain types of cases, and then only by the consent of the Official Side.

In short, the Bill says to Civil Servants :—

> You have already no right to strike.
> Hereafter you shall not influence the House of Commons, which is your employer.
> You shall not associate with outside workers, even though their conditions are cited against you whenever you try to improve your own.
> You must place yourselves completely in the hands of the Government, which will do with you precisely what it pleases.

This, and no other, is the plain meaning of the Bill as it affects Civil Servants.

Two things appear to have been overlooked in the drafting of the Bill, however. There is no provision for the summary execution of Civil Servants who blow their noses in official hours. And the sub-title to the Bill is also omitted—"Peace in our time, O Lord."

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THE DRIVING FORCES OF THE CHINESE REVOLUTION

By J. FINEBERG

THE victory of the nationalist forces at Shanghai is of enormous consequence for the Chinese national revolution, not only from the standpoint of the enlargement of the territory of the National Government and the addition to it of the most important industrial and commercial centre in China, but also from the political and social standpoint. There is no need to stress the economic significance of Shanghai; that is very well known. Suffice it to say that Shanghai has always been regarded as the prize by all the factions fighting for power in China, for the very considerable revenues accruing from the possession of this extremely important centre enabled those who held it to be financially independent.

It is the social aspect of this victory that must principally engage our attention. In this respect the Shanghai victory may mark the completion of a stage and the beginning of a new line of development of the Chinese revolution. The manner in which Shanghai was taken in itself brings out this point very strikingly. As is known, Shanghai was not taken directly by the regular Southern troops, but by the workers from within. This emphasises the rôle of the proletariat as a driving force of the Chinese revolution, and the acquisition of the great industrial centre of Shanghai by the nationalists implies that this rôle will be increased from now onward.

It is from this standpoint that the effect of the capture of Shanghai by the Southern forces upon the future course of the Chinese revolution must be regarded. The problems to which this situation gives rise are not new, for they have arisen in connection with struggles for national emancipation in other countries. The experience of national emancipation movements teaches that the time comes when certain classes participating in the struggle begin to waver in their attitude towards the movement and even

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to abandon it, and the extent of the influence which these classes exercise over the movement determines whether the national struggle is carried to its logical conclusion or not. Recent events in the Chinese nationalist movement are an indication that the attitude of the respective classes participating in the movement is undergoing modification and that this is calling forth certain reactions among the other classes participating in the movement.

The Chinese revolution is a national revolution in that it is a fight of the Chinese people against the domination and exploitation of foreign imperialism. On the other hand, it is a social revolution in so far as it is a fight of the Chinese bourgeoisie against the obsolete survivals of feudalism and present-day militarism, and for the establishment of conditions in China which will facilitate its development on modern lines; and of the workers and peasants against their exploiters, the bourgeoisie and the landlords, and against feudalism and militarism, the removal of which will clear the field for developing their struggle to its widest scope. As a national movement the Chinese revolution unites all sections of the people whose interests are affected by the domination of the imperialists. As a social revolution the diverse interests of the various and numerous classes cut across the unity of national interests and cause friction within the national movement itself. This does not mean that a clear line of demarcation can be drawn between the national revolution and the social revolution in China. The domination of foreign imperialism is an extremely important factor, tending to keep China in the state of semi-feudalism, and is an obstacle to the development of the national industry and commerce of the country. Furthermore, it serves as a bulwark of class rule. Consequently the social revolution is closely bound up with the national revolution, and the diversity of class interests among the Chinese people have their reactions upon the attitude of the various classes towards the imperialists.

The various classes participating in the national movement in China may be enumerated as follows :—

The compradore bourgeoisie, who act as the middlemen between foreign trade and industry and the Chinese market, and whose prosperity therefore is closely bound up with foreign

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imperialism. Their desire to create in China a field for their investments independently of foreign capital inclines them towards the national movement, but their close connections with the imperialists predominate in determining their attitude, which can be described as definitely counter-revolutionary.

Then comes the Chinese wealthy industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, whose economic development is hampered by the competition of the foreign capitalists, whose competitive ability is strengthened by the domination of foreign imperialism in China. This class supports the national movement in so far as its aim is to abolish the privileges of the foreign imperialists and create the conditions for the development of national industry and commerce.

The next is the large class of petty traders and artisans, the urban petit-bourgeoisie, who are oppressed by the feudal survivals in the country which are fostered by imperialism.

In the rural districts there is the class of landowners and the so-called gentry—the traditional official class in China, which is closely connected with the landowning class. Both these classes have their connections with the compradore class. Like them, their association with the national movement is extremely doubtful, and they represent a decidedly reactionary element in the country.

The vast mass of the Chinese people consists of small landowners, tenant farmers and landless agricultural labourers, exploited by the landowners, the officials and the militarists.

Finally there is the growing industrial proletariat. The place of the two latter classes in the revolution will be revealed in the further elucidation of the subject.

For a long time the national movement in China was confined to the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie and to the intellectuals —the students. The leaders of the movement relied upon the military forces they could collect for the achievement of their aims. As long as this was the case the movement made no headway, for no national movement can make progress unless it carries the mass of the people with it. The incidents in Shanghai and Canton in May and June, 1925, roused the masses, particularly the proletariat, and swept them into the national movement. Since that time the movement has been steadily rising to its culminating point.

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Influenced by the Communists, the Kuomintang—the Nationalist Party—realised at last that the organisation of the masses of the people and gaining their support was absolutely essential for the success of the national revolution. The party was reorganised as a mass national party, and wide propaganda was carried on among the masses of the small merchants, artisans and the peasantry to win their adherence and active participation in the national movement.

But the masses of the people cannot be roused on the strength of abstract slogans and remote prospects of liberty. They have to be given a direct material interest in the revolution and immediate prospects of relief from the burdens from which they are suffering. The peasants demand relief from the severe burden of taxation and extortionate rents. They want land. The workers demand relief from the terrible exploitation that prevails in China and an immediate improvement in their conditions. The Kuomintang, therefore, was obliged to adopt an agrarian and labour programme. It had to recognise the right of the workers and the peasants to organise not only for the prosecution of the national revolution as such, but also in defence of their own class interests. It had to work in conjunction with the trade unions, and the organisation of peasant leagues became a definite part of the work of the party.

Being a party composed of representatives of the diverse classes represented in the national movement, the Kuomintang naturally reflected all the diversified interests of these classes. As the revolution developed the diversity of interests of these classes became more pronounced, and this in its turn could not but cause reactions in the party and in the movement generally. The internal friction in the Kuomintang became more acute in proportion as the workers and peasants began to play a more prominent part in the revolutionary movement. For example, Canton could serve as a base for the revolutionary national movement because of the determined and stubborn fight put up by the Hongkong and Canton workers. The revolutionary movement was fostered also by the activities of the workers in Shanghai. In the rural districts in the South the peasants were the backbone of the revolution and prevented a revival of the counter-revolution. As the rôle of the workers and peasants in the revolution became more important

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they became more persistent in their demands for the satisfaction of their own class interests.

The predominance which the workers and peasants began to assume in the national movement caused disquietude among the bourgeois classes, and they began to raise the alarm. In the Kuomintang this was reflected in the growing activity of the Right Wing, which raised the cry that the Kuomintang was a Bolshevik organisation. Their activities, which began to assume a definitely anti-national character, led to their expulsion. The expulsion of the Right Wing, however, did not eliminate all the Right Wing elements from the party, and as the class differences in the party developed they accumulated strength.

Between the Right Wing and the Left there is the so-called Centre, which may be said to represent the middle industrial and commercial bourgeoisie, which is torn between its interests in the national revolution and its fear of the predominance of the workers and peasants. At the head of this Centre is Chiang Kai-shek, the commander-in-chief of the Southern forces, who observed the growing strength of the Left Wing with apprehension.

Things reached a crisis in March last year, when Chiang Kai-shek combined with the Right Wing to bring about a coup in Canton and took power into his own hands. Wang Ting-wei, the chairman of the party and of the Government and leader of the Left Wing of the party, was obliged to leave Canton. Chiang demanded the resignation of all the Communists from responsible posts in the party, and control passed over entirely into the hands of the Centre and the Right.

Soon, however, a remarkable balance of forces within the Kuomintang was revealed. Chiang Kai-shek found that, deprived of the support of the Left Wing, it was impossible to hold a Central position and that he must be inevitably drawn to the Right and into the camp of the counter-revolution. He discovered that without the Left Wing there was practically no revolutionary movement and without the Communists there were hardly any active workers in the movement. This brought him to his senses. and he began to make overtures for a compromise. A joint conference of the Executive Committees of the Communist and Kuomintang Parties was held last May, at which Chiang Kai-shek ostensibly

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climbed down, agreed to break with the Right Wing and co-operate with the Communists. But his surrender was only temporary.

The internal class antagonisms in the national movement were not eliminated by this however. On the contrary, they continued to develop. The success of the Northern campaign extended the territories of the Kuomintang authorities, and in these newly acquired territories the same developments took place as had previously taken place in the Kwantung province. The peasants organised and put forward their demands. In many districts they came into direct conflict with the local gentry and landowners, who saw in the peasant leagues a menace to their power. With the arrival of the Southern troops at the Yangtse and the inclusion of the industrial centres of Hankow and Hanyang in the territories of the Kuomintang the weight and influence of the industrial workers in the national movement increased. Trade unions were rapidly organised, and the workers demanded improved conditions. In China the conditions of the workers are so bad that any demands for improvements that will make their conditions at all human, even according to Chinese standards, may quite naturally seem excessive. For example, workers receiving six Mexican dollars per month would demand eighteen dollars per month, which is still a miserably low wage, but a demand for an increase in wages of 200 per cent. would quite naturally shock an employer.

The bourgeoisie saw their economic interests threatened by the growing power of the workers and demanded that some restraint be put upon them. As a result of their pressure the Kuomintang Government last December issued a decree introducing arbitration as a method of settling industrial disputes and making this compulsory for certain branches of industry, like army supplies, transport, enterprises dealing with finance and enterprises supplying the common needs of the people. In Hankow the authorities issued a decree fixing a limit to the increases in wages which each category of workers could demand.

The discontent of the bourgeoisie with the growing activity and influence of the workers and peasants again caused an acute situation to arise in the Kuomintang. Open propaganda began to be conducted in the party against the Left Wing and the Com-

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munists. Matters came to a head again at the beginning of last month, just prior to the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang. Chiang Kai-shek led a definite and open campaign against the Left Wing, to which the latter replied with a vigorous counter-campaign. The situation bore all the symptoms of an approaching rupture in the party.

Meanwhile the imperialists were watching the conflict within the Kuomintang very closely, and there is not the slightest doubt that they placed great hopes on a victory for Chiang Kai-shek against the Left Wing. They did not confine themselves merely to hoping, but did their best to encourage the bourgeoisie to bring about a split in the movement. By their propaganda they fanned the fears of the bourgeoisie that the revolution was taking a Bolshevik turn and hinted that a way could be found for a peaceful settlement of the differences between China and the foreign Powers if the Left Wing could be eliminated and the labour and peasant movement crushed.

Besides the conflict of class interests in the national movement the imperialists placed their hopes upon another factor to crush the radical section of the national movement, namely, the military factor. Without in any way deprecating the military leadership of the Southern forces, it may be stated that the recent victories are due to a considerable extent to the defections of the Northern generals, who at critical moments came over to the Southern forces. Some of these generals sympathise with the national movement, and have maintained contact with the Southern forces even when they retained their command under the Northern militarists. Such, for example, is Chin Yun-ao, formerly a commander under Wu Pei-fu, and who is now holding up the advance of Chang Tso-lin. The majority of the generals who have come over to the Southern side merely display the traditional attitude of Chinese militarists of siding with the winning side.

The estimation of the situation in the national movement made by the imperialists is not without foundation. It was inevitable and foreseen that the time would come when a section of the bourgeoisie would tire of the revolution, and that when a certain stage of success had been reached they would long for a compromise. This longing would be quickened if the driving forces which have

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carried them to this stage would appear to them to be gaining the mastery and threaten to rob them of the successes they had obtained. Feeling powerless to resist this new power by their own efforts, they would be inclined to compromise with the former enemy in order to resist the new one. In such an event the deserters from the Northern camp, together with the Right Wing elements in the Southern military forces, would be a serious factor to contend with.

This stage has not yet been definitely reached in the Chinese national revolution. The bourgeoisie has not yet exhausted its revolutionary rôle for the reason that its gains in the revolution have not yet been consolidated. On the other hand, while the imperialists are inclined to flirt with the wavering elements in the national revolution, they are not yet in a mood to make such concessions as would satisfy the desires of the moderate element. On the contrary, the aggression now being displayed by the imperialists, particularly by the British imperialists, is sufficient to convince all the elements striving for the emancipation of China that a stern fight has still to be waged before that object can be achieved. The bombardment of Nanking by the British and American forces has served as a striking object-lesson to all classes in China in the imperialist method of " solving the China problem."

Nevertheless, with the further development of the struggle the stage when the bourgeoisie will desire to call a halt becomes more and more imminent, and the recent crisis in the Kuomintang is a symptom of its approach. The capture of Shanghai may appear to the moderates to round off the gains of the revolutionary advance. while the establishment of direct contact between the vast industrial population in Shanghai with the national revolutionary movement and the Kuomintang will have the effect of quickening the process of class differentiation in the movement.

There is not the slightest doubt that if the movement of the workers and peasants were restricted the very serious danger would arise of the revolution running to seed and meeting with the fate that was suffered by the revolution of 1911. The national revolution in China was revived by the workers and peasants ; they have urged, inspired and carried it to its present successes and on the further development of the labour and peasant movement

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depends the complete fruition of the revolution. There is no question also that the further development of the labour and peasant movement will meet with the increasing resistance of the Right Wing of the bourgeoisie and provide them with a pretext for abandoning the national revolution.

Thus a delicate situation has arisen in the national revolutionary movement in China, and this was reflected in the crisis in the party in the beginning of March. The Right Wing, encouraged by the imperialists, were obviously working for a split, which if it took place at the present time would be of decided advantage to the reactionary elements. Again, the wavering of the middle industrial and commercial bourgeoisie was revealed in their bold opposition to the Left Wing and their collapse at the moment when the fatal decision had to be made. The crisis showed also that the Left Wing, consisting of the alliance of the workers, the peasants and the urban petit-bourgeoisie, represents the backbone of the revolutionary national movement and that it alone can be relied upon to carry it to its victorious conclusion.

This was confirmed by the outcome of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Kuomintang that took place in Hankow in the middle of March. Chiang Kai-shek was faced with the same dilemma that he found himself in last May, with this difference, however, that the growth of the labour and peasant movement resulting from the acquisition of new and extensive territories by the national revolutionary forces had increased the power of the Left Wing and enabled it to make his declaration of submission more definite than that of last May. He was obliged openly to recognise the Kuomintang Party as the supreme authority in the national revolutionary movement and that the supreme control of the armed forces of the revolution must lie in the hands of the national revolutionary government. Again, he has been compelled to admit publicly that the Communists are essential elements in the national revolutionary movement and that without them it is impossible to rally the masses in the towns, in the country and in the army for the revolutionary cause. It remains to be seen to what extent he will act up to his declaration.

On the other hand the Communists have definitely joined the Kuomintang Government, and thus will be able to bring the

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influence of the proletariat and the peasants to bear directly upon it. Two Communists, Hsu Sao-chen and Tang Ping-san, have accepted the posts of Ministers for Labour and Agriculture respectively. These two posts may be regarded as the most important posts in the Government at the present time, for they have to deal with the two departments of activities of the government which, if properly handled, will guarantee to the national revolutionary movement the continued and increasing support of the masses of the workers and peasants. The fact that these posts are now held by Communists will help the carrying out and further development of the measures which the Kuomintang Government have already passed for the relief of the conditions of the workers and peasants and the removal of those obstacles to their being carried out which have hitherto existed locally.

The last crisis in the Kuomintang ended in a victory for the Left Wing, but other crises of a similar nature are inevitable in the future. For the time being the truculent and aggressive attitude of the imperialists towards nationalist China is compelling the bourgeoisie still to cling to the national movement, but the time can be clearly foreseen when their class interests will gain the upper hand and they will seek more determinedly for a compromise with the imperialists. The outcome of the last crisis has shown, however, that the situation in China is such that the real driving forces of the Chinese national revolution are increasing in power and velocity, and that when the critical moment does arise when the bourgeoisie abandons the movement the proletariat, the peasants and the urban petit-bourgeoisie will have consolidated their forces and be in a position by their own efforts to carry the revolution farther forward and to a higher stage. The addition of the organised and militant industrial proletariat of Shanghai to the national revolutionary forces is a guarantee of that.

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IMPERIALIST PENETRATION IN SOUTH AMERICA[1]

By CODOVILLA

The Process of Class Differentiation

IMPERIALIST penetration plays an important rôle in the class differentiation and radicalisation of the workers and the peasant masses. In countries such as Venezuela, Bolivia, Columbia and Peru, the peasants formerly lived in a more or less primitive but peaceful manner. They consumed natural products, &c. There was no regulation of ownership of land ; everyone was as a matter of course a proprietor of land. But as American imperialism gradually penetrated into the country the peasants were expelled from the American concessions and were then forced to gain their livelihood as wage labourers. Some entered the mining enterprises and industry, while others were employed in agricultural enterprises. In view of the form of exploitation of these enterprises these new proletarian strata, concentrated in the places where they worked, are still more accessible for revolutionary propaganda.

In the Argentine and Chile, owing to the industrial development above mentioned, there is already a skilled proletariat in existence, and in the industrial regions a class struggle having the same characteristics as in Europe. In Brazil the proletariat, although not very numerous in relation to the total population of the country, represents a considerable force for the latent petty bourgeois revolutionary movement in view of the fact that it is highly concentrated. In these countries, where technique is highly perfected, the majority of industrial and agricultural enterprises possess modern equipment.

But the economic development of Latin America varies not

[1] The first portion of this article appeared in THE LABOUR MONTHLY for April, 1927, pp. 225-237.

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only according to the countries, but also according to the various districts. In Argentine, for example, where economic development is greater than in the other countries, we have quite different forms of economy: in the districts of Buenos Ayres, Santa Fé, Cordova, there is an extensive industrialisation and exploitation of the land; in the big towns, such as Buenos Ayres and Rosario, there are big modern factories with thousands of workers employed, just as in Europe.

In certain regions of Patagonia, Chaco and Minones a semi-feudal economic system is in existence, where the foreign enterprises and big landed proprietors exercise an almost colonial exploitation.

But in the centre of the country the situation is similar to that of Europe. That is why American imperialism here has the industrial bourgeoisie as its support. Here a section of the petty bourgeoisie, impoverished by the process of concentration, finds employment as technicians. Recently the latter has begun to invest its capital also in agricultural enterprises, accelerating the process of concentration of land. To fight against this the liberal bourgeoisie proposes dividing up amongst the peasants the land which still belongs to the State and the big landed proprietors, and thus creating a class of small agricultural proprietors on whose support it could count for the development of industry.

In Brazil there are regions, like the Amazon, that are still unexplored. These regions are very rich and will provide great wealth of raw material in time to come.

Let us now turn to examine the exploitation of the peasants. They are concentrated in a tropical region where there are no houses. They live in shanties made from dead leaves and work all day long under the sun. Infectious diseases are rampant. They live absolutely isolated from all civilisation ; in the coffee-growing districts they live three or four days' journey from the railway. The police of the big landed proprietors have their rifles constantly in their hands, and fire at the rebellious workers on the slightest pretext. These are conditions of primitive slavery.

In Chile large masses of workers are concentrated in the mining regions. More than 90,000 workers are employed in the saltpetre, copper and coal industries. These are native peasants from

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the south evicted from their land, who hire out their labour to the big foreign enterprises. Here they live altogether, exploited in a brutal manner which keeps them in a permanently revolutionary mood. These enterprises constitute a kind of colony, where the foreign capitalists allow no liberty to the workers. The latter live in barracks that belong to the owners ; as soon as a strike breaks out they are turned away by the proprietors' police and left without any means of subsistence, sometimes during intense cold. Every strike in this region always ends in bloodshed. The workers know this and prepare to defend themselves against the provocation of the employers. No one imagines such a thing as a peaceful strike.

Therefore in certain countries the consequences of this imperialist penetration are equivalent to a development of industrialisation, and hence the birth of an industrial proletariat. In other countries, however, there is a concentration of agricultural exploitation and an agricultural proletariat is created. In general a process of pauperisation of a large part of the urban and agrarian petty bourgeoisie is taking place.

Development of the Revolutionary Movement Against the Native and Foreign Bourgeoisie

Such a situation engenders a latent spirit of revolt against the reactionary government of the big landed proprietors, who are the instruments of imperialism in several countries of Latin America. The social composition of this revolutionary force varies according to the economic and political situation of the country. Where the situation is based on the industrial bourgeoisie and certain strata of the urban petty bourgeoisie, the latter and a section of the intellectuals are allied to imperialism. Where it is supported by the big landed proprietors the most revolutionary elements come from the petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, allied to the proletariat and the peasantry. The revolutionary development and the combative forces must be analysed in accordance with the classification in categories which we have adopted for the various countries.[2]

[2] See first section of this article published in The Labour Monthly last month (April, 1927, pp. 225-231).

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In Central America and the Antilles the latent revolutionary nationalist movement has for its aim economic and political independence in respect to American imperialism and the constitution of a federation of democratic republics. Its revolutionary programme includes the revision of debts and American concessions, dividing up of the big landed properties, State support for small industry and participation of the workers and peasants in the government.

The revolutions which have now taken place in Nicaragua, Honduras, &c., are all directed against the reactionary governments of the big landed proprietors and against American imperialist oppression. In Nicaragua the people took up arms to chase out the reactionary President imposed by the United States, which sent forces to suppress the revolt, thereby preventing its triumphant issue. In these countries the existing nationalist parties are formed of the petty bourgeoisie and workers and peasants. The workers' organisations are in general in favour of class-collaboration, and the reactionary government does not tolerate any class organisations other than those adhering to the American Federation of Labour. Communist groups are illegal and persons suspected to be Communists are condemned to several years' imprisonment.

The revolutionary spirit of the petty bourgeoisie and of the working peasant masses is also developed in the northern parts of South America. In Venezuela, in Colombia, in Bolivia and Peru, as a result of the brutal exploitation by the landed proprietors and foreign concessionaires, the native peasants and workers have several times revolted, but they have always been beaten and massacred. After these revolts they are driven to accept still worse conditions of labour, or else they are deported to other regions, for it is impossible for them to secure the means of subsistence. In spite of the brutal reaction a large number of the peasants are armed and inclined to fight, but these are only scattered groups with primitive and non-centralised district organisations. The reason of this is that in former days they worked on the land communally on the basis of the agrarian commune. Their desire is to return to this collective form of exploitation ; this retrograde tendency and their feeble resistance to oppression results in their being driven more

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and more off their land day by day by the big agricultural or mining enterprises. The petty bourgeoisie and intellectuals, also oppressed by the governments of the big landed proprietors and by imperialism, endeavoured to profit by this latent revolutionary spirit of the peasant masses in order to organise revolts and conquer power.

In Venezuela there have already been two or three attempts at revolution, and we are now in a period when the peasants and petty bourgeoisie will in a very short time to come attempt a revolution.

In all these countries the Communist movement will play an increasingly prominent rôle. At the present time the existing tendencies, though calling themselves anarchists, syndicalists or Socialists, are, while not having a clear ideology, in general all favourably inclined to Soviet Russia. They know that the revolution will place itself on an economic ground : land to the peasants, communal labour.

That is why in Venezuela, although there is only a small Communist group, the petty bourgeois leaders endeavour to collaborate with it and also accept a part of its programme in order to engage in an armed struggle against the big landed proprietors.

In Bolivia and Peru, despite the brutal oppression, revolutionary groups defending Communism have recently sprung up. They were immediately dissolved. but their action found an echo among the working and peasant masses, and proved their revolutionary spirit.

Mexico is an important factor which facilitates the revolutionary development in these countries. Mexico helps the revolutionary movement to extend its economic and political influence and dispose of a base for its defence against American imperialism. It was not without reason that the Presidents of Nicaragua and Guatemala sent a protest to the League of Nations against the intervention of the Mexican Government in their internal affairs, accusing it of supplying arms to the revolutionaries.

In Chile a revolutionary movement exists under the direct influence of the Communist Party. About 40 per cent. of the Chilian population is composed of workers with a tradition for organisation. A social crisis has given the Communist party the chance to

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play an important rôle. Unfortunately, having no political education, the party has not always understood its rôle as a class party, and has let itself be duped by the petty bourgeoisie, which has utilised its influence amongst the masses in its own interests. In 1924-25, a petty bourgeois revolution took place, conducted by the soldiers, in which the workers participated, and which ended in the taking of power in collaboration with the working-class organisations. A series of decrees on social legislation were passed : confiscation of the latifundia, eight-hour day, labour insurance, trade union control over production in the mines, transport, commerce, banks, &c. A Constituent Assembly was to be convened to modify the constitution and put the new social reforms into force. During the struggle the proletarian masses, urged on by the demagogic policy of the petty bourgeoisie, believed they had entered the decisive period of social transformation and prepared to participate in the Constituent Assembly to give it a class content and obtain power. A section of the peasants and students joined in the movement, but the petty bourgeoisie were overcome by panic in face of the radical turn of events. American imperialism, which had assisted the movement to drive from power the landed proprietors, who had been the instruments of British imperialism, brought pressure to bear on the petty bourgeoisie and threatened to withdraw its support if it submitted to the demands of the workers.

Meanwhile many workers' strikes for partial demands were taking place. This exasperated the owners of foreign concessions, who threatened, particularly in the saltpetre region, to close down the factories if the government did not moderate the workers' demands and reduce the taxes on the export of saltpetre. The government did not hesitate to crush the workers who had brought it into power, and the general strike of last year was taken as a pretext for this suppression.

During the revolutionary period quite a number of social laws (eight-hour day, employment through labour exchanges exclusively, &c.) were voted. But the foreign enterprises refused to apply these laws, as also the increase of wages demanded by the workers. They began expelling from the barracks those workers who forwarded these demands. The latter occupied the factories

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and hoisted the red flag, reckoning on the government defending and nationalising enterprises. But the government replied by sending troops to eject the workers from the factories. The suppression was terrible. More than 3,000 workers were killed and many others wounded. More than 1,000 were deported.

This brutal repression did not crush the movement. This period of reaction was followed by a new revolutionary wave : the workers' organisations began reorganising ; the peasants also organised. The public service employees, the teachers, railwaymen, and transport workers were organised in various national federations, grouped in a committee of action which led the special campaign. Every year in Chile on November 7 and May 1 the entire life of the country is paralysed. At the present time there are more than 100,000 members in the various organisations.

The Communist Party, which springs from the old Social Democratic Party, is increasing every day. It works in collaboration with the Labour Federation. It publishes four daily papers, two reviews and several weeklies. The co-operatives are in its hands. It has representatives in the municipalities and nine members in parliament.

In Ecuador a revolt of the army took place last year against the big landed proprietors similar to that in Chile. An organised labour movement exists. The Communist Party and the Socialist Party will probably soon fuse into a single party affiliated to Moscow.

In Brazil, in spite of the mineral wealth which will turn this country into an industrial power, the big landed proprietors, who are in power, have hitherto prevented industrial development. Out of 32,000,000 Brazilians there are 350,000 industrial workers and 9,000,000 agricultural labourers. (In 1914 there were only 200,000 industrial workers. This shows progress in spite of everything.)

There are only 100,000 workers organised in trade unions, but they are not organised in a national federation. No Socialist Party exists as yet ; a party of the petty bourgeoisie has only now been formed. The Communist Party has existed for four years, and has already a certain influence, above all in the working-class centres.

Argentine is the South American country where class differentiation has operated most and where a proletarian class struggle is

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proceeding against the agrarian and industrial bourgeoisie, and possessing European characteristics.

Formerly several parties of the bourgeoisie existed, but the process of concentration of agricultural and industrial enterprises, due to the penetration of foreign capital, made them disappear from the political arena. At the present time there are two big parties in existence—the Irigoyen Radical Party and the Alvear Party, which are parties of the agrarian and industrial bourgeoisie. The former is under the influence of American imperialism and the second under the influence of British imperialism. The Socialist Party has been in existence for thirty-six years. In 1917 the Left Wing of the Party split away and formed the Communist Party. The Socialist Party slipped towards the Right more and more every day and became more and more of a petty bourgeois party, which has not its own economic basis for constituting an independent party. On the other hand, industry being concentrated in two or three big towns only, the countryside has to accept the industrial products of the towns at very high prices, which makes it possible to keep wages up in certain industries, thereby creating a labour aristocracy, which also joins the Socialist Party.

Although already forty years old, the trade union movement of this country is not in proportion to the number of workers (only 30 per cent. of the workers are organised in the unions) nor to the fighting spirit. The trade union membership has undergone periodical fluctuation, due partly to repression and partly to the weak leadership of the movement. The latter is at the present time experiencing a crisis, the main causes of which are paralysis of a certain section of industry, excess of European immigration, and lack of confidence in the leaders of the trade union movement. For these reasons the organisation has now only 120,000 members, while it formerly had a much larger number.

The Communist Party is developing into a mass party, and its influence is increasing in the trade union and political fields.

Uruguay reflects the political and economic life of the Argentine ; all the phenomena which take place in the Argentine are soon repeated in Uruguay.

The situation in Mexico is at the present time one of the most interesting in South America. Important social changes are taking

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place there. The subsequent revolutionary development will depend upon the influence that the working-class forces will have upon it. The peasants, who have fought to get the land, really want it and directly confiscate it in certain cases.

The interests of the revolutionary peasants are now bound up with the interests of the Mexican labour movement. The peasants of other South American countries who hope to make their agrarian revolution, and are encouraged by the Mexican Government, in order to be able to hold out in the present situation and not fall into the hands of imperialism must extend their political and economic influence over the neighbouring countries.

President Calles has already understood this and invited workers and intellectual delegations to visit Mexico. The Social Democrats of South America speak of the Mexican Government as a government which applies Socialist principles. They endeavour to distract the attention of the working and peasant masses, who have great sympathy for the Soviet Union, and while not attacking Russia they say : " We do not deny that they are trying to establish Socialism in Russia, but just wait a little and see that we will nevertheless establish Socialism in Mexico without either violence or dictatorship."

On the other hand, the American Federation of Labour, commencing to understand the revolutionary importance of the Latin-American countries and the danger they represent for American imperialism, is endeavouring to deflect the workers from the revolutionary struggle by propaganda in favour of a Pan-American Federation, which would remain under its influence.

A delegation was sent to the South American countries for this purpose. This delegation stated : " We can come to an understanding, we, the big industrial country of the North and the agricultural countries of the South, in order to augment the well-being of the working class and peasantry of the entire American continent."

The Relation of the Anti-Imperialist Struggle of the Latin-American Countries to Capitalist Stabilisation

Among other fundamental conditions of the present capitalist stabilisation there is a question of outlets for finance and industrial capital and for manufactured products.

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The figures that have been given show the importance of the Latin-American countries for imperialist expansion, and in particular for American imperialism. The latter understands that the situation in Europe is not very reliable for the investment of its capital, and that South America would be a much safer place.

The anti-imperialist struggle on the American continent in weakening American imperialism will give effective aid to the international revolution. The situation in Latin America is very favourable for an anti-imperialist movement. All struggle against the big landed proprietors is an anti-imperialist struggle, and the peasants can play a big revolutionary rôle in this struggle if the workers know how to link up this problem with the conquest of the land.

A primary condition for the development of the revolutionary movement in Latin America is to strengthen the revolutionary movement and the Communist Party in Mexico. This country should become the centre of the struggle against the big landed proprietors and against imperialism, especially that of North America. The petty bourgeois government must be compelled to realise the revolutionary programme with which it came into power, while there must be a continued mobilisation of forces for the application of this programme by a real workers and peasants' government when the petty bourgeoisie proves itself incapable of so doing. The petty bourgeoisie must be prevented by all measures from becoming a reactionary instrument in the hands of American imperialism and of the national bourgeoisie which is now in process of formation.

In the other countries the action of the Communist Parties needs to be strengthened by mobilising the peasants and petty bourgeoisie in mass organisations linked up with the Communist Party on the basis of the anti-imperialist struggle.

The existing Anti-Imperialist League of Latin America carries on abstract general propaganda without having studied the objective situation of each country and the fundamental problems affecting the masses.

The anti-imperialist struggle should be conducted throughout the whole continent and in every country, and should be connected with the struggle against the reactionary governments of the big

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landed proprietors. The workers and peasants of these countries must be shown that during the first period they must support the revolutionary movement of the petty bourgeoisie and the industrial bourgeoisie against the big landed proprietors as the first step before arriving at the constitution of their own government.

The Communist Parties of Latin America, while allying themselves to the different social strata during this struggle, will maintain their position as leading parties of the working class, aiming at the dictatorship, but without trying to leap over the historically necessary stages of the democratic revolution.

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BERTRAND RUSSELL AND MODERN PHYSICS

By MAX LEVIEN

(*Concluded*)[1]

ON page 64 of Russell's book we find a passage which is liable to give rise to the greatest confusion in the minds of readers who are not familiar with the roots of the crisis in modern physics as well as with the present theoretical chaos prevailing among scientists. Russell says:—

> Evolution in biology and relativity in physics seemed to have established the continuity of natural processes more firmly than ever before; Newton's action at a distance, which was always considered something of a scandal, was explained away by Einstein's theory of gravitation. But just when the triumph of continuity seemed complete, and when Bergson's philosophy had enshrined it in popular thought (Why does he say that? The influence of Bergson's philosophy was very limited, and in science has at the most left a few traces in the psycho-Lamarckian theories.—M. L.), this inconvenient discovery about energy came *and upset everything*. How far it may carry us no one can yet tell. Perhaps we were not speaking correctly a moment ago when we said that an electron passes from one orbit to another "without passing over the intermediate space"; *perhaps there is no intermediate space; perhaps it is merely habit and prejudice that makes us suppose space to be continuous.* Poincaré—not the Prime Minister, but his cousin the mathematician, who was a great man—suggested that we should even have to give up thinking of time as continuous, and that we should have to think of a minute, for instance, as a finite number of jerks *with nothing between them.* This is an uncomfortable idea, and perhaps things are not so bad as that. (Our italics throughout. —M. L.)

This passage shows how the "modern" man who is not familiar with materialist dialectics, blunders into contradictions so soon as he tries to generalise from the experience gained in special spheres. The conflict arising from the necessity of applying ideas, both of continuity and of discontinuity, divides physicists into the two corresponding schools. A fine picture! That our thought needs both categories in an equal degree, and indeed reflects the dialectical inter-relations and the dialectical synthesis of the opposites—*i.e.*, of the two categories in nature and in society,

[1] The first portion of this article appeared in the last number of THE LABOUR MONTHLY, April, 1927, pp. 241-249.

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seems to most scientific men contradictory. Eugen Dühring, also, it is well known, considered it contradictory, if not absolutely nonsensical. But it should be equally well known that no less a person than Friedrich Engels read him a lesson, in *Anti-Dühring* from which scientific men, even to-day, could obtain more methodological instruction than from all the modern "philosophers" put together. But who is so old-fashioned as to take any notice of *Anti-Dühring* nowadays? Those who have felt any necessity either resort to the vulgar materialism of Büchner, Vogt or Moleschott, or turn to Mach or Pearson, or else give themselves over to transcendental idealism. And so the differences among physicists go merrily on.

If continuity and discontinuity are irreconcilable, that is, if the question can only be answered with the formula of "Yea, yea" or "Nay, nay," then we should like to ask Mr. Russell how is it that the differential and integral calculus has any right to exist, and in particular how are we to explain its tremendous practical use in the description of concrete natural processes, and the establishment of objective regularities, since here the opposite, the *dialectical* formula, prevails, "Yea-nay, nay-yea"? The question is unanswerable. The contradictions between continuity and discontinuity, as between quality and quantity, and so on, provide the motive force as well as the guiding thread in the development of thought in mathematics as well as in natural science and history. What, however, "jerks (in time) with nothing between them" may be we can leave Poincaré and Russell to imagine for themselves. Since the "jerks" cannot differ more than, say, two material particles, we cannot see why the "interval" between two "jerks" cannot be bridged by an integration covering the two "jerks." Why, too, should the idea of discrete "jerks" in time be "uncomfortable," or in particular more "uncomfortable" than that of discrete particles of matter or energy, or of quanta? When it is realised that differentiation and integration, and all methods which presuppose such polar opposites, always produce dialectically a higher method of thought, nothing "uncomfortable" will be seen about "jerks." Why should time claim a monopoly of continuity, and matter, and with it space, be condemned completely to discontinuity? What dialectical

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materialism claims on this point, in opposition to all kinds of idealism, is that neither the discontinuity of space and time, nor their continuity, should be considered the " last " quintessence of all existence, since the value of the application of ideas of continuity lies in the possibility of their break-up, and *vice versa*. The necessity of the conception of an aether (to which finally Einstein himself has had to yield) lies precisely in the need of dialectical materialist thought to conceive of discontinuous matter as a particular condition of a space-time continuum.[2]

This was realised even by Hegel, whose dialectics are so much disliked by the scientific men, since they are so definitely in opposition to any shallow empiricism and any logical narrowness. That, however, is too kind to them; actually they do not concern themselves with such a back-number as Hegel at all. And yet there are to be found in Hegel's *Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences* the following words:—

> Continuous and discrete magnitudes must not be looked upon as of different *kinds*, as if the categories of the one do not apply to the other ; rather they differ in that the same thing is considered now under one, now under the other, definition. The contradiction of space, time and matter, in respect of their infinite divisibility, or on the other hand their nature as consisting of indivisible parts, is nothing but the looking upon them at one time as continuous and at the other as discontinuous. If space, time, &c., are placed only under the category of continuous quantity, they are infinitely divisible ; under that of discontinuous magnitude, they are in themselves divided and consist of indivisible parts. The one is as one-sided as the other.

Further, Russell's statement that an electron may jump from one orbit to another without passing through any intermediate space involves insuperable difficulties only if the space is conceived of as simply an emptiness, and an aether is dispensed with, or, as previously noticed, if an Einstein-ian aether is assumed,

[2] Notice that no single postulate of Marxist dialectics is in opposition to the idea of a multi-dimensional manifold. This is for the benefit of those empiricists among us who at the mere sound of an attack upon their holy trinity of dimensions become so excited that they smell out already the resurrection of those spiritist " mediums " which Engels so thoroughly dealt with. This is of course childish. The new mumbo-jumbo, whose shadow even many Marxists think they see behind the non-Euclidean geometry of Gauss, Lobatchewsky, Riemann and Helmholtz, does not enter through the door of these great thinkers' mathematics, but through that logic which recognises only " hard " ideas, and measures the progress of human thought by the centimetre-rule and the second-pendulum.

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which actually, considered from a physical standpoint, has no properties at all, since according to Einstein neither the conception of motion nor those of mass and energy can be applied to it. If Russell accepts this, as he does in his previously quoted statement (p. 49), he ought to say at this point that the contradictions in the explanations of electronic motion are due to the fact that we have as yet no clear conception of the aether as a universal medium, that we can postulate something to which we attach no very definite ideas, although we may very well be able to give a clear definition of what we do postulate.

We have further to urge against Russell's account that the quantum theory in no way, neither *a priori* nor *a posteriori* postulates a movement taking place in the intermediate space, into which no time-factor enters. The originator of the theory himself states:—

> That they (Bohr's "stationary states"—M. L.) are the only possible ones, is therefore not at all to be assumed, since the transition from one state to another is in no case to be looked upon as a sudden or timeless one. (M. Planck, lectures on "The Theory of Heat Radiation, Leipzig," 1923.)

Another assertion in this connection requires special comment. The author tries to establish a conflict between biology and modern atomic physics. He represents things as if the laws of evolution in biology were exclusively in the direction of continuity. If Russell were to obtain only a superficial knowledge of biology, he would find that, particularly since the beginning of this century, thought in terms of discontinuous changes has found the widest application, both in zoology and in botany, and has already yielded important results. We shall mention at random a few of those departments in which the conception of phenomena from the point of view of discontinuity is essential in order to get an objective grasp of principles. We refer, for example, to the whole of systematics, the statistical study of variation, the theory of pure lines of descent, or "Genotypes" (by Johannsen), the experimental analysis of characters, by crossing, on Mendelian lines, the modern investigation of chromosomes (Morgan's school), the investigation of mutation phenomena, Ehrlich's side-chain theory, the chemistry of colloids in relation to physiology, and the continually increasing application of higher mathematics to various spheres of zoology and botany. In biology we frequently have to

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deal with multiple integral proportion, but things in the world of plants and animals are more highly developed, and the phenomena involving the transition from quantity to quality, continuity to discontinuity, and *vice versa*, are far more complicated than in the sphere of non-living matter. Hence the use of conceptions of discontinuity in biology is still in its infancy, though it already shows great promise.

The helpless position into which Russell falls, thanks to his scepticism and eclecticism, is perhaps best shown by the concluding passage of the book, where he says:—

> The theory of relativity has shown that most of traditional dynamics, which was supposed to contain scientific laws, really consisted of conventions as to measurement (!—.M. L.), and was strictly analogous to the "great law" that there are always three feet to a yard. (Why the irony? What should the "great law" be?—M. L.) In particular, this applies to the conservation of energy. This makes it plausible to suppose that every apparent law of nature *which strikes us as reasonable* is not really a law of nature, *but a concealed convention* plastered on to nature by our love of what we in our arrogance choose to consider rational. Eddington hints that a real law of nature is likely to stand out by the fact that it *appears to us irrational*, since in that case it is less likely that we have invented it to satisfy our intellectual tastes. And from this point of view he inclines to the belief that the quantum-principle is the first real law of nature that has been discovered in physics.
>
> This raises a somewhat important question: Is the world "rational," *i.e.*, such as to conform to our intellectual habits? Or is it "irrational," *i.e.*, not such as we should have made it if we had been in the position of the Creator? I do not propose to suggest an answer to this question. (Our italics.—M. L.)

How kind! First he constructs a mystic question, and then addresses it to the public, with the sole object of turning round himself and running away. We fail to see what advantage such a proceeding can bring to the reader. We also have some slight doubts as to the utility of such methods of propaganda for the advancement of scientific knowledge, which was certainly intended to be the author's object. What Russell finally gives us as the result of his expedition into the field of modern atomic physics is the purest agnosticism, or rather nihilism. If Einstein's relativity theory were really what Russell so contemptuously calls it, it would be totally incapable of fructifying, as it does by innumerable suggestions, a whole series of both physical and mathematical

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investigations. Towards this "higher nonsense" (we borrow the expression from Engels) which Russell gives us Einstein is, of course, just as unsympathetic as was Darwin, for example, towards the anti-Socialist and anti-Semitic use made of his theory of natural selection by crazy race-theorists and eugenists. What, in fact, Russell does is to explain cheerfully that "a true law of nature" is, first, "a concealed convention," and, second, that it is the more highly esteemed the less we understand it. "The greatest living philosopher" was rather reckless when he made the statement about mathematics that it is the science in which one does not know what one is talking about, nor whether what one says is true. Our "philosopher" seems here particularly to have had himself in mind. He appears, indeed, not to know what he is talking about, nor whether what he says is true. If a law is to be more highly valued the less reasonable it is, why not take the Bible as the basis of physics? Any fool, if we may say so, could undertake to supply on the shortest notice as many "irrational" laws of nature as Russell's despairing heart could wish for. He could provide in all shapes and sizes as many hob-goblins, fairies, gods, devils, angels, hydras, cyclops, witches and what-not as required. What "the greatest living philosopher" is preaching here is the open bankruptcy of science and its abandonment to the Jesuits. "Hie thee to a nunnery!" There they produce these "irrational" laws for the fun of the thing. A science which takes as its ideal to establish laws whose principal advantage lies in their incomprehensibility to the reason, may please an abstract, logic-chopping, sceptical, mystical agnostic, but the great majority of scientific men will very definitely take the view that science has to do with the very comprehensible objective, causal relations of material processes, and that "concealed conventions," on the other hand, are not worth a pinch of snuff. Natural science is not yet a part of the Foreign Office, Mr. Russell! From the point of view of exact science, the construction of anthropomorphic, mystical, "irrational" laws is nothing less than reactionary nonsense. The "supposition," moreover, that all apparent laws of nature are really concealed conventions which we impose upon nature, is long ago played out. It occurs constantly as "conventionalism" in the different varia-

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tions of the philosophical symphony of the critical empiricists, Mach, Petzoldt, &c. Again it appears as William James's pragmatism, or the "fictionalism" of Hans Vaihinger, whose phi osophy of "As if" merely looks as if it were a philosophy.

Any scientific man who is in earnest about his science will see in Russell's thesis, as in the similar tendencies of his countryman Eddington, nothing but the complete breakdown of speculative thought. And just because both are taken as authorities in science a most energetic attack needs to be made upon them.

We have finished our discussion with Mr. Russell. Even if we had intentionally avoided entering upon a disputation with this omniscient one about his philosophy, his various statements on physical subjects would have given us a sufficient idea of the basis of his outlook, which in his physics, as always with Russell, is revealed as a mixture of realistic, even materialist and dialectical, with subjectionist and even positively mystical elements. We are heartily sorry for the I.L.P. Still, "facts are hard things"; history with "the greatest living philosopher" is—witchcraft.

Messrs. MacDonald, Snowden and Thomas have now in the sphere of philosophy also thoroughly got themselves into the soup with their new genius. *Eclecticism in philosophy is the brother of opportunism in politics*, and history treats them both in the same way. And they know what that means !

This short but undoubtedly clever book of Russell's confirms once more, and particularly clearly, the correctness of Engels's views on natural science, as expressed in the following words :—

> *Dialectics, freed from mysticism, have become an absolute necessity for science, which has now left the stage in which the rigid almost mathematical categories of logic will suffice for its needs.* Philosophy takes a posthumous revenge upon science for its abandonment of her—and still the scientists might have been alive to the scientific implications of philosophy, that there was something in philosophy which was worth considering from their point of view. (Leibniz, the originator of the mathematics of the infinite, as opposed to the inductive thinker Newton, who plagiarised and debased him ; Kant, whose cosmic theory preceded Laplace's ; Oken, the first man in Germany to propound a theory of evolution ; Hegel, whose all-embracing comprehension and classification of science is worth more than all the materialist nonsense)."[3] (Our italics—M. L.)

[3] This passage is taken from Engel's fragment "Dialectics and Natural Science" which forms the first chapter of *Naturdialectik*, recently published by the Marx-Engels

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Russell is indeed far from being one of those thinkers who have "abandoned philosophy"—he is a "philosopher" first and foremost—but nevertheless he is one to whom the materialist dialectics of Marx and Engels are a book sealed with seven seals.

How many false scents and side issues science would have been spared if she had taken to heart Engels's advice, given to the scientific men when he was already sixty-five, when he admonished them, "Learn from nature, your master, *but learn also from the history of human thought.*" This occurs of course in his great work "Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science," the second preface (1885) which ends with the impressive words :—

> And these are just the things which were considered polar opposites, irreconcilable and insoluble, the fixed boundaries and differences of classification, which have given modern theoretical science its limited and metaphysical character. *The knowledge that these distinctions and antagonisms actually do occur in nature, but only relatively, and that on the other hand that fixity and absoluteness are the products of our own minds—this knowledge constitutes the kernel of the dialectic view of nature.* The view is reached under the compulsion of the mass of scientific facts, *and one reaches it the more easily by bringing to the dialectical character of these facts a consciousness of the laws of dialectic thought.* At all events the scope of science is now so great that it no longer escapes the dialectic comprehension. But it will simplify the process if it is remembered that the results in which these discoveries are comprehended are ideas, that the art of operating with ideas is not inborn, moreover, and is not vouchsafed every day to the ordinary mind, but requires actual thought, and this thought has a long history crammed with experiences, neither more nor less than the accumulated experiences of investigation into nature. By these means, then, it learns how to appropriate the results of fifteen hundred years' development of philosophy, it gets rid of any separate natural philosophy which stands above or alongside of it, and the limited method of thought brought over from English empiricism. (Our italics—M. L.)

This should also be taken to heart by those Marxists who seek to debase the Marxian method and dream of an alliance with mechanistic materialism. This mechanistic or, as Engels often called it, "vulgar" materialism, is just as helpless before Russell's scepticism and agnosticism as it showed itself a few years ago

Institute, and contains much material of interest in connection with actual current problems of scientific method.

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against the reactionary attacks of Mach, Petzoldt, Poincaré, Pearson, &c. At best it hides behind the dogmatic statement that everything must, whatever happens, be "finally traced back" to mere quantities or to atomic and molecular motions (to-day they prefer to say electronic motions); so runs its creed.

There are on the other hand opportunists in the Labour Movement, still calling themselves "Marxists," who announce the coming of a "new era" of old rubbish, and prophesy "a development of thought, proceeding from Engels, but going beyond him," which can be briefly described: from mechanistic materialism to Mach's positivism, and from Darwin to neo-Lamarckism.[4] (What is meant is the psycho-Lamarckism or neo-vitalism of Pauly, Francé and Wagner, since by neo-Lamarckism is usually understood the tendency of the famous botanist Wettstein, of Vienna, who has nothing in common with the so-called vitalists.) We who are *dialectical* materialists, however, are more interested in those thinkers who, if sometimes unconscious of their rôle, and sometimes falling to one side or the other towards idealism or "vulgar" materialism, nevertheless prepare the way for really dialectical thought, as, for example, is shown in a masterly passage from the distinguished Berlin physicist (and antagonist of Mach), Max Planck, who shall have the final word :—

> But if the character of absoluteness is not ascribed to space and time, that character is not abolished from our conception of the world, but is removed, as it were, backwards and applied to the four-dimensional manifold, which arises from the fusing together of space and time, through velocity, into a simple continuum. This contains something of that arbitrariness and independence, and hence absoluteness.
>
> Similarly, the so often misunderstood relativity theory does not abolish the Absolute, but in fact brings it more definitely into the foreground, in so far as physics bases itself upon an Absolute lying in the external world. For if the Absolute, as many metaphysicians maintain, exists only in one's individual experience, there would conceivably be as many kinds of physics as there are physicists, and

[4] So we read in the editor's preface (Otto Jensen, who with Karl Vorlander, a neo-Kantain, is one of the latest theoritical lights of German Social Democracy) to the collection of old articles of G. Eckstein and F. Adler, issued under the name *Marxism and Science*, which is devoted to the propaganda of Marxism. In addition it contains two well-known articles of Engels. The only new feature is Jensen's addition. The volume is called *A Memorial on the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Death of Frederick Engels, Natural Philosopher.*

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> we should be completely unable to explain the fact that it has been possible, up to the present at least, to construct one science of physics, whose content, for all those who investigate it, whatever may be the differences in their experience, is effectively the same. That we do not construct the external world to suit ourselves, but, on the contrary, it controls and compels us with irresistible power, is a fact which should not be assumed to be obvious in these days when positivist tendencies of thought are so popular. While we in the investigation of natural phenomena proceed from the individual, conventional and accidental to the general, real and necessary, we seek beyond the dependent the independent, beyond the relative the absolute, beyond the transitory the permanent.

And Planck concludes :—

> Who can be sure that an idea to which to-day we ascribe an absolute character will not show itself, perhaps to-morrow, in some new sense as relative, and give way to a higher absolute idea ? There is only one possible answer : According to all that we have experienced and learned, nobody can give an assurance of that kind. In fact, we can say with complete confidence that the absolute will never be simply comprehended. The Absolute is to be regarded rather as an ideal object which we have before us without being able to reach it—an unpleasant thought, to which, however, we must reconcile ourselves. We are in the position of the mountaineer exploring unknown territory, who never knows whether, behind the peak which he sees before him, there will confront him a still higher one. But like him, we have the consolation that we continue to go forward and upward, and nothing prevents us from getting ever nearer to the desired end. Thus to draw towards the goal is the true effort of any science, and we can say with Lessing : "Not the attainment of truth, but the successful struggle after it, is the reward of the researcher ; and cessation only becomes wearisome in the end. Vigorous healthy life results only from work and progress. From the Relative to the Absolute."

We have nothing to add to these excellent words of Planck except the observation that "work and progress" results only from struggle.

In the name of the victory of the dialectical materialism of Marx, Engels and Lenin, these three real spiritual leaders of the new epoch, physics also will free itself from the bonds which now hinder its full development, and will triumph on the basis of a new monistic-dialectical method—or else it will not triumph at all. The guarantee against the possibility of the latter alternative is provided by the development of that social class which alone

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fears no obstacle, which alone can attain to a higher synthesis of human knowledge and a victorious scientific culture, which alone truly possesses a consistent monistic-philosophic outlook, since it alone has discovered the road along which the locomotive of history hastens towards its goal, it alone embodies the storm and stress of human progress, it alone is inspired with the spirit of Prometheus : the guarantee of the unlimited victory of mankind over nature, through nature, with nature—the proletariat.

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The World of Labour

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ITALY

Italian Trade Unionism

ON January 4 the Central Committee of the Italian *Confederazione Generale del Lavoro* passed a resolution stating that as

> it appears impossible to carry out the enrolment of members for 1927 the Committee declares its functions to be extinct, and commissions the Executive Committee to proceed with the liquidation and settlement of the remaining interests of the Confederation.

The Committee then moved its headquarters to Paris and now carries on activities of a restricted character under the wing of the temporarily anti-Italian imperialism of France.

This retreat of the reformist leaders into "private life" has had a very damaging effect on their prestige among the Italian workers, who have no such retreat open to them, but must remain constantly exposed to attacks of the employing class. The retirement of the Confederation leaders has meant a strengthening of the grip of the Fascist trade unions, of which membership is now in effect compulsory. Even in July, 1926, the membership of the Confederation was only just over six thousand; it has now fallen to a negligible figure.

The retirement of the Confederation leaders coincides with something of a crisis in the economic condition of Italy. The effects of the policy of restricting credit (dictated by the English and American banking interests, which have a strong hold over the Fascist Government) are now being seen in a serious damping down of industrial enterprise and a consequent rise in the number of unemployed workers. As an inevitable corollary of these conditions the employers are making an attack on wages, and at the same time there is a widespread move to raise house rents. In Naples alone over 30,000 inhabitants are reported to be under notice to quit their homes or pay exorbitant increases of rent.

In circumstances of this kind the need for a strong trade union movement, led with boldness and foresight, is abundantly clear. The workers show every sign of discontent, and the opportunity for rebuilding a militant trade union organisation is, on the side of the workers, a perfect one.

Such a reconstruction of the trade union organisation, if it is to be effective, must certainly be of a clandestine character, since no working-class bodies which function legally can hope to withstand the force of the State machinery of repression. Already active steps have been taken by the more alert sections

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of the workers, acting under Communist guidance, to set up a new basis for trade union organisation in factory committees, federated locally and linked on a national scale with a revived General Confederation.

In Milan, the former centre of the C.G.T., arrangements were made in February to convene a congress of factory committee representatives with a view to reviving the C.G.T. and associating the factory committees with it. This work proceeds in the teeth of tremendous difficulties created by heavy repression under the Emergency Laws and the violent hostility of the employers. It is only possible for any such revival of the trade union movement to take place owing to the illegal activities of the Communists, who are putting all their energies into this essential task of rebuilding the Labour movement shattered by the joint efforts of the Fascist Government and the reformist leaders. The method of working is mainly the circulation of factory papers explaining the nature of the political situation in the light of the everyday struggles of the workers; in addition to such papers each covering a local field of circulation, it has been possible to produce a number of issues of the *Unità*, formerly the Communist daily. The success of this means of propaganda is so marked that the Minister of the Interior has sent a special instruction to his prefects urging them to root out by every possible means the circulation of illegal papers.

UNITED STATES

The Coal-mining Situation

THE expected struggle of the American mineworkers began on April 1, when nearly 200,000 workers came out in the bituminous (soft) coal industry of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Arkansas. The owners have refused to renew the 1924 agreement and demand a 20 per cent. reduction in wages as well as the complete institution of the "open shop."

The Coal Industry

The annual production of coal in the U.S.A. increased from 509 million tons in 1913 to 530 millions in 1925, and 578 millions in 1926. The American industry is affected by all the factors which have led to a breakdown of the coal industry in all the chief capitalist countries. In particular, the use of petroleum and natural gas, as well as the development of energy from water power, has rapidly increased as contrasted with the use of coal. Thus the energy developed by the use of natural gas and petroleum together was in 1913 only 12 per cent. of that of coal, whereas in 1924 it was already 40 per cent. Considering the great increase in the number of miners since the pre-war period, and the number of new mines opened up, and the advance in productive methods, it can be readily seen that the industry is actually stagnant. Since last autumn there has been a comparatively great increase in the monthly output, due to greatly increased exports as a result of the British lock-out and to loading up of stocks in expectation of the strike in April of this year.

There are 9,000 commercial coal mines in the U.S., operated by 7,000 owners (besides 6,000 insignificant private and waggon mines, the latter being mines having no railroad siding and producing less than 1 per cent.

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of the coal). In 1920, 2,700 of the total of 15,000 produced 42 per cent. of the coal. The number of commercial mines increased 50 per cent. between 1913 and 1920, due to war expansion, and the consequent over-development has been one cause of the chaotic condition of the industry. Corporation control of the industry is indicated by the fact that in 1922 four big corporations, operating 215 mines, produced 7 per cent. of the coal, and 200 corporations controlled over 50 per cent. of the output. About one-quarter of the commercial mines are owned by consumers, largely big railroads, steel corporations, &c. Capacity of the mines (throughout only bituminous mines are referred to) is about one billion tons yearly, whereas production is less than 600,000,000 tons. More than half the total mines of the country were reported as closed in October, 1926, a time of peak production. These facts explain the crisis in the industry.

The non-union fields of the South have been replacing the union fields of the North, particularly of the Central Competitive Field (Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Western Pennsylvania), at a very rapid rate, so that the production of the country is now about 70 per cent. non-union, as against 30 per cent. in 1919. This displacement of union production has been due to the smashing of the union and the consequent low wages, absence of strikes, &c.; to the discriminatory railroad freight rates, which permit Southern scab coal to be shipped twice the distance of Northern union coal for the same price; and to the co-operation of the local and national governments with the owners against the miners. Profits are difficult to get at, but we do know that in 1920 one-third of all the mines which reported made a profit of 50 per cent. or more, and one-seventh reported profits of 100 per cent. or more. At the beginning of 1927 one of the biggest Southern operators, the Island Creek Coal Company, controlled by a relative of President Coolidge, declared a 400 per cent. dividend.

As indicated before, annual production is less than 60 per cent. of capacity. In a normal year the industry can produce, during the rush season, 12 million tons weekly, and recently reached as high as 15 million tons. During September of last year, with a seasonal increase, large exports, and stocking up for the coming strike, consumption was only 9 million tons. Large amounts went into stocks, and it was expected that by April 1 stocks would be about 85 million tons, or sixty-eight days' supply. The owners' journal, *Coal Age*, says that "the industry will face April 1 with the largest stock pile in its history." (*New York Journal of Commerce*, 13-1-27.)

The Miners' Conditions

Working conditions among the miners are particularly bad, so far as employment, wages, and safety conditions are concerned. Miners earn very low wages because of the fact that the mines are usually open less than 200 days out of a possible 308 working days in the year, and not all the miners average even so much. Between the late spring slump and the autumn rush there is a difference of 30-40 per cent. in capacity required. During the August, 1920, boom, when prices were the highest ever reached, there was 40 per cent. of lost time, most of which was due to the owners. During that month only one-eighth of the mines worked full time. Over one-half

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of the miners worked three-four days a week. During the 1921 depression there was 60 per cent. of lost time, and only one-fourteenth of the mines worked full time. Over 60 per cent. of the miners worked two-three days a week. In Kansas in 1925 only 16 per cent. of the union mines worked steadily, the rest working one or two days a week. In Pennsylvania some union miners averaged ten and a-half days a month for five years. Only 700 out of 1,200 Pennsylvania mines, and only 140 out of 400 Illinois mines were in operation, and many of them on part time.

Most mining communities are so isolated that during periods of unemployment the average miner cannot go elsewhere for a job, aside from the fact that he is untrained for other work. Hours are now eight and one-half at the "face," plus an average of three-quarters of an hour going to the "face." These figures exclude lunch time, and one can say that the American miner works nine hours a day, excluding lunch, and without pay for time spent for going to and from the mine.

Wages are low, due to great unemployment and part-time in all the mining districts, and to scab wages in the non-union districts. In 1921, when the cost of living was about 12 per cent. higher than it is at present, miners averaged as low as $420 a year in Tennessee, $500 in West Virginia (both scab districts), $550 in Ohio, and $762 in Western Pennsylvania, the latter two union districts. A minimum budget, necessary for a working man's family in 1921, as worked out by the reactionary employers' association, the National Industrial Conference Board, was $1,697.95. How the miner's family lived on such wages is obvious. Piece-work rates in union and non-union districts compare as follows: hand (pick) work, $1.11 a ton; machine work, $0.78, in the union fields; hand work, $0.40 a ton; machine work, $0.37 a ton, in the non-union fields.

Health conditions among the miners are extremely bad, due to cramped quarters, bad air, accidents, &c. The death rate as compared with that of European miners is as follows: U.S., 4.08 deaths per thousand workers (in 1924); Germany, 3.11; Belgium, 1.58; France, 1.22; Great Britain, 1.13. The number of explosions in Great Britain has been zero since 1920, due to the use of rock-dust. In American mines the laws requiring such safety precautions are violated in wholesale fashion. During the last twenty years there has been an average of over 2,000 killed in American mines each year, and in some years the number exceeded 3,000.

Living conditions, on the wages that miners earn, are on a very low level. The average miner's family spends only two-thirds of the amount which they should spend on food. In unionised Illinois $583 is spent yearly on food, whereas the average amount necessary is $784. In non-union Alabama the figures are respectively $472 and $724, and in non-union West Virginia they are $511 and $783. The death rate of the babies in all mining counties of Illinois in 1925 was 12 per cent. greater than for the rest of the state, and two of the most important mining counties had infant mortality rates 60 per cent. greater than for the state as a whole. The explanation is unemployment, part-time, low wages and great exploitation, resulting in insufficient nourishment, bad environmental conditions, &c.

The question of civil liberties (the right to hold meetings, go freely about

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the town, organise into unions, &c.) is one of the worst features of life in non-union districts, especially during strikes, but also during normal periods. In many mining towns one cannot enter the town without a pass from the company. Hoards of scabs, company gun-men and Burns' detectives have been imported, and they are aided by the state police, the militia and the courts. Tear-gas, riot-guns, searchlights, steel wire fencing are common sights. The miners have been beaten, starved, persecuted, and jailed under a continuous reign of terror.

The Mine-Workers' Union

During the eight years that Lewis has been president of the union, his administration has never won a strike, and he has been responsible for the loss of 200,000 miners, so that the union now has at most 200,000 to 250,000 members. He has been dining with the operators, and publicly advising wage cuts and the elimination of 200,000 men from the industry. He has never denied charges made by Farrington that he has accepted bribes amounting to far more than $750,000 to permit scab mines to operate during the strike.

The Progressive campaign in connection with the elections for offices of the international union, as well as for the bi-annual convention, was carried on more intensively than any previous one. Progressive and Left Wing leaders, such as Howatt, Keeney, Brophy, Hapgood, &c., made tours throughout the locals, and the Progressive candidates for international offices, Brophy, Stephenson, and Brennan, issued much publicity in the form of pamphlets, programme statements and special election statements. The latter came out against compulsory arbitration, for a Labour Party, nationalisation of mines, democracy in the union, organisation of the unorganised field, reinstatement of the expelled Left Wingers, wage demands, and the rest of the Progressive programme.

The Lewis campaign against the Left Wing and the Communists has been ruthless, extending from connivance with the operators and the Government in order to send Communists to goal for long terms, to disqualifying them for office, and expelling them. Progressive meetings were broken up by the reactionaries, with the aid of the police.

The official results of the elections for international offices were not announced until just before the Convention, more than a month after the elections had finished. The vote as announced was 60,000 for Brophy, 173,000 for Lewis, a total of 233,000. This is an impossible figure, for it means that 85 per cent. of the membership voted. At a union election 60 per cent. is an extremely high figure. The first results announced were 290,000, but these were withdrawn after it was reported by the Secretary-Treasurer that the total membership was only 273,000. There is good reason for believing that Brophy actually polled a majority.

During the election of delegates to the Convention, Lewis kept a squad of more than 100 "organisers," each receiving about $5,000 a year, whose sole duty was the prevention of the election of opposition delegates and the organisation of fake delegations from non-existent locals. In every possible way Progressive delegates were kept away from the Convention—by rump

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meetings which annulled their credentials, by withholding of railway fares, by last-minute illegal suspensions and expulsions, &c.

The machine attempted to terrorise the rank and file by slugging a number of Progressive leaders, by unseating others right in the Convention, and by trying to discredit the records of the leading Progressives and Left Wingers and to isolate the Communists. The tactics by which it carried out this strategy were similar to the pre-Convention methods already described. The fake delegations were given bootleg rum on the trains, and were completely drunk and at the mercy of the machine by the time they reached the Convention city. They were carefully trained, and in the Convention sat massed in the front of the hall, and booed, cheered, and bellowed at the sign from their leaders.

Lewis' objective is to place the union on the same class collaboration basis of worker-employer co-operation that so many other A.F. of L. unions have been reduced to. The achievement of this aim was practically completely attained in the Convention by the elimination of the class-struggle clause in the preamble to the constitution; by gaining the right for unlimited assessment without any rank and file control; by the expulsion of the Communists and Left Wingers and the elimination of all minority opinion and activities; by securing 50 per cent. increase in the salaries of the bureaucrats; by securing unqualified endorsement of all official policies; by making illegal the holding of office by any foreign-born miner, although foreign-born miners make up a majority of the members; and by eliminating all constitutional sanction for elementary rank and file democracy. Through the methods of terrorisation mentioned before, this programme was put through, but it was at the expense of a great loss of political prestige, even among many delegates whom the machine had counted upon. The struggle of the rank and file began mildly with Brophy's speech attacking the failure of the reactionaries to organise the non-union fields. It became stronger through the struggle to unseat the leading Left Wingers and Communists. It gained real strength in the fight against the proposal to give the officials unlimited assessment power. It defeated the bureaucrats on the matter of the 50 per cent. salary increase, although it was counted out by the machine's tellers. It defeated the machine so overwhelmingly that there was no way of counting the opposition out on the issue of making local elections bi-annual instead of annual.

After the Convention ended the Report of the Wage Scale Committee, appointed by the Convention, was heard by the delegates. It was accepted by all but thirty votes. It instructed the officers to make no agreement reducing wages, and to have the new contract run for two years. (The Progressive bloc had fought for wage increases, a one-year contract, and a joint contract for hard and soft coal fields.) A Policy Committee was appointed which was to notify the membership of developments, and which included only machine supporters. This committee was to have supreme power in case of a strike. The Wage Scale Committee report did not mention such vital issues as the five-day six-hour week, a joint contract for both fields, an appeal to the non-union fields to join the strike, &c. The exact wording of the report is significant: "We recommend . . . to get the best agreement possible from the operators of the Central Field on the basis of no

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reduction in wages." This is distinctly permission to make all possible concessions on every other issue but wages, and actually will mean a reduction in wages even if the present rates are maintained. It recommended that the outlying districts be authorised ". . . to negotiate with their respective operators when the opportunity presents itself," but not to conclude any agreement until after that in the Central Field had been concluded, or until ". . . *permission to do so had been granted by the Policy Committee.* . . ." This is an open invitation to the miners to insist on district agreements and a sliding wage scale, and to the bureaucrats to betray the men again.

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Is Trade Unionism Played Out? The Minority Movement's Answer. (N.M.M., 16 pp., 1d.)

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